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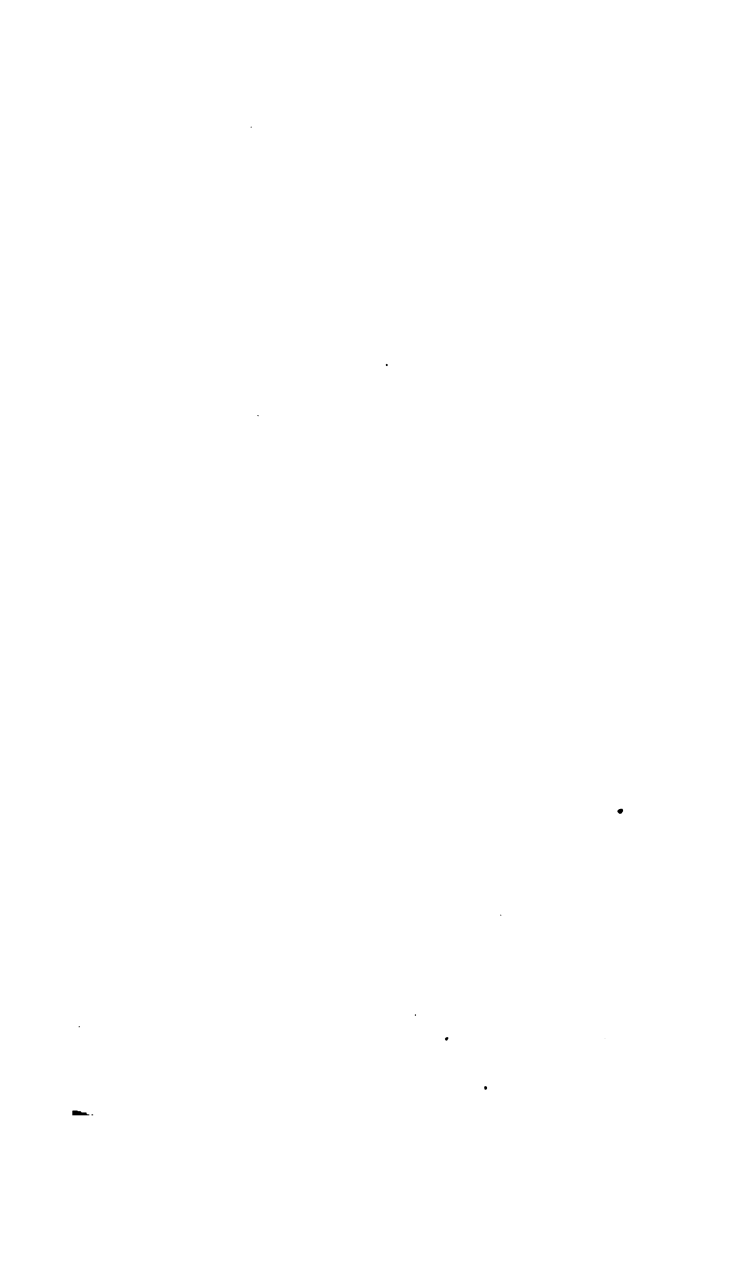


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S. GERMAN



LIVES  
OF  
THE ENGLISH SAINTS.

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**St. German,**  
BISHOP OF AUXERRE.

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v. 9

MANSUETI HEREDITABUNT TERRAM, ET DELECTABUNTUR IN  
MULTITUDINE PACIS.

NEW YORK  
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## ADVERTISEMENT.

CARE has been taken in the annexed work, to avoid as far as possible all dogmatism upon disputed points of doctrine and discipline. The austerities of Saints and the miracles they performed, are, in some measure, an exception ; both because the numbers of those who have ungenial feelings with regard to them, are gradually diminishing, and because they form as it were the very substance of ancient Hierology. At the same time many things which are out of date in this country, have been produced just as they were found in original documents for the sake of historical veracity. Facts have been often related as facts without any intention of proposing them as examples. For which reason little has been said about the development of any principle into its consequences, or the different stages of the process, as necessarily involving an opinion and a decision upon the thing developed or the reality of the development. Those miracles which have been given without any stress upon the authority or evidence, are here considered true and credible as far as testimony can make any thing credible. Still on the circumstances and accidents chiefly has the weight been laid, inasmuch as probable evidence varies in its influence in proportion to the shades of human disposition and prejudice. Where no authority is given, that of Constantius, the contemporary of St. German, must be

supposed ; elsewhere the author or the sources of the information are distinctly marked. Hericus, the Commentator of Constantius, after his original, stands out among the recorders of these miracles.

Lastly, the dates of Boschius the Bollandist have been followed. Though on some occasions it might have appeared warrantable to depart from them, yet it was safer not so to do. Dates are, as many other things, like a house of cards. Take away one, you endanger the whole fabric. The chronology of the learned Jesuit is all of a piece. It is finely interwoven with the facts, and it does not materially vary from that of our great Chronologer, Archbishop Usher.

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LIFE OF  
**St. German,**

BISHOP OF AUXERRE, A. D. 418-448.

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CHAPTER I.

*Introduction.*

THE subject of the following narrative will be called, not St. Germanus nor St. Germain, though precedents are not wanting for these forms of his name, but St. German. This it is believed is his true English name, as connected with the ancient and warm sympathies of our country. Several places still bear witness to these sympathies, while they support the assertion just made. The town of St. Germans in Cornwall, with its old Priory, the Abbey-church of Selby in Yorkshire, dedicated to St. German, the Cathedral church of the Isle of Man, a chapel yet visible in the Abbey of St. Albans, and the field of a famous victory obtained in Wales, by the Britons under St. German's auspices, and still called Maes Garmon, or Field of German : these are the most prominent instances, though doubtless there are many other traces of the Saint and his name, in that storehouse of old traditions and fond remembrances, Wales.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He is called German in Cressy, Collier, Stillingfleet, Dugdale and Camden ; In the Primer of Queen Mary, Germaine, but in the Psalter of Elizabeth, German.

St. German was born in the fourth century, and flourished in the beginning of the fifth. He was not a Briton by birth, parents, or habitual residence. Yet he is numbered among English saints on account of his great services to our nation, and has been honoured with the high title of Apostle to the Britons by his contemporaries and by subsequent writers. He was bishop of Auxerre in France, a town not very far from Sens, which was the metropolitan See, and the name of Auxerre is commonly added to his own, to distinguish him from another famous St. German, bishop of Paris a century later. <sup>1</sup> Six other distinguished saints are also mentioned as having at different times, and in different countries borne the same name ; a martyr near Amiens, a bishop of Constantinople, a bishop in Africa, a martyr in Spain, another at Cesarea in Cappadocia, and a bishop of Capua. The canonization of St. German of Auxerre was not determined by those rules which in later times were introduced to avoid mistake ; either the age in which he lived was marked with greater candour, or his character stood too high to require any investigation. The testimonies to his fame from early writers, equal, one might almost say, the number of authors in Gaul or Britain, who lived within a few centuries of his own time. St. Gregory of Tours has transmitted to us the words of St. Nicetius, who, a century after St. German's death, wrote to a person in high authority in the following way : " In what language can I speak of the illustrious German, Hilary or Lupus ? such miracles are performed at the time I write before their shrines, that language fails me in relating them. Persons afflicted by demoniacal possession are suddenly raised and suspended in the air, while undergoing the

<sup>1</sup> See Martyrol. Antissiod. 1751.

ceremony of Exorcism, and proclaim publicly the glories of these Saints." Accordingly Auxerre, from the date of his elevation to the bishopric, became the object of universal reverence in the West. No town in France, say the learned,<sup>1</sup> can boast of such a number of precious offerings. Yet there is nothing in the natural advantages of the place to raise it in men's consideration. To the mere traveller for pleasure, Auxerre must appear very insignificant. The country around is uniform and tame. Its vineyards produce excellent wines, but vineyards are in reality not pleasant objects to behold. The river Yonne is large enough to supply the town with the necessaries of life, but too inconsiderable on the other hand to give much dignity to the walls it washes. The buildings are not of the most stately and attractive appearance. Many collegiate Churches in France exceed St. Stephen, the cathedral of Auxerre, in architectural beauty. Yet notwithstanding Auxerre has ever had more than the ordinary respect of Christendom, which is to be traced up to St. German its founder and benefactor. Such was the title of this Saint to Canonization; not any formal examination into his claims, but the general consent of men, the acknowledged reality of his miracles, the proverbial use of his name, the durable efficacy of his saintly life.

St. German's name is found in all the early martyrologies and calendars. Martyrologies are not confined to the names of Saints who have sealed the Faith with their blood, else were he excluded from them. He was a Confessor. In the presence of danger and amidst much suffering, he bore witness to truth and opposed profane violence. Yet were his sufferings chiefly self-imposed;

<sup>1</sup> Gallia Christ. Abbayes de France Beaunier, tom. II.

and occasioned by the mortifications of a singularly ascetic life ; and unless we except the temporary difficulties to which he was exposed by the contact of barbarian chieftains, voyages at sea, and opposition of heretics, his life may be said to have passed on the whole calmly and quietly. He died at Ravenna in Italy, surrounded by the imperial court, and attended by several bishops of note. In the later martyrologies, his day is appointed to be kept on the 31st of July, as the editions of the Roman, by Baronius and Usuard, shew. But in ancient times, the 1st of October was, together with the former, observed in his honour ; and it is no small commendation (if he needed any,) that his memory was blessed solemnly by the universal Church in the West twice a year. At Auxerre, as many as six days were devoted to the praise of its Patron. One may add for the benefit of persons accustomed to distinguish between the relative importance of days, that the 31st of July is still kept in France as a Duplex, and at Auxerre as a Duplex Primæ Classis, according to the dignity of the Patron of a Church.

But we have yet to inquire before we enter upon the details of his life, what was that peculiar connexion of St. German with England which has deserved him the title of an English Saint. A short notice in one of Bede's<sup>1</sup> minor works will explain this point sufficiently for the present purpose. "The Pelagian heresy, he says, was disturbing the faith of the Britons ; on which account they implored the assistance of the Bishops of Gaul, who sent to them German, Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes, both endued with Apostolical gifts, to defend the Christian Faith. The two Bishops, on arriving, restored religion to its purity by

<sup>1</sup> Bede de sex Aetatibus ad an. 4402.



the word of truth and the evidence of miracles. Moreover the Saxons and Picts were engaged in war with the Britons at that time, and had united their forces. Whereupon the two champions undertook their defence, and through Divine interposition defeated the enemy. For German assumed himself the conduct of the war, and instead of making use of the Trumpet, gave orders that the whole army should strike up the cry of Allelujah, which terrified their formidable adversaries to such a degree that they took to flight." This, as it will be seen, occurred in his first visit to England ; but he also paid the Britons a second, the circumstances of which are not in all points attainable from the remains of so early a period. The fact however is certain, and is not only related by Constantius, the original biographer of St. German, by Bede, and Hericus a monk of Auxerre, but testified by the words of the martyrology of this last town. "The 31st of July, it says, is sacred as the day of the decease of St. German of Auxerre, at Ravenna. He was a bishop distinguished for his birth, faith, doctrine, and wonderful gift of miracles. Having been sent into Great Britain together with St. Lupus, of Troyes, by the prelates of Gaul, he overthrew the Pelagian heresy in that island ; and again a second time having resorted thither with Severus of Treves, he entirely eradicated the remaining seeds of that error." It will be seen by this that the companion of St. German was not the same on the two occasions, the former being St. Lupus, Bishop of Troyes, the brother of the famous Vincentius Lirinensis, and the friend of St. Sidonius Apollinaris, and the latter Severus, an eminent Bishop of Treves, the residence of the imperial Prefect.

These are the principal reasons which justify us in ranking *him* among our own worthies. Nor is he

solitary in this claim to naturalization. Palladius, (not to speak of St. Augustine, the great Archbishop of Canterbury, and many others,) Palladius, the apostle of the Scots, was not a Briton ; some have thought he was a Greek by birth, who was attached to the Roman See. In truth there are distinguished persons in history who appear to belong to no nation exclusively, but to be the common property of society. Of this kind were the Apostles of our Lord ; they were claimed as Patrons by every Church they visited, and their Jewish origin was merged, so to say, in the wider privileges of Catholic birthright. Such also in his degree was St. German. He is French, because he flourished in Gaul ; he is British, because he converted Britain from heresy ; he is Italian, because he terminated his glorious career at Ravenna. Next to the service of establishing primarily the Christian Faith in a nation, none may deserve higher praise (if the word may be used for what is above praise,) than that of extirpating error, and restoring the Doctrines of the Church to their natural purity. Such was St. German's work for the British Church. The establishment of Christianity in this island dates, as has been already remarked, from times Apostolical ; but in process of time Orthodoxy was assailed by the perversions of the well known Pelagius, who in all probability was himself a Briton, and who by means of his emissaries created a schism in our Church, and threatened the very foundations of its existence. Deputed by the Gallican bishops with the sanction of Pope Celestine, German fulfilled the object of his mission, and secured to himself the eternal obligations of the Britons, with the illustrious title of Apostle.

Were there not very vague notions afloat of the state of *Christendom* in the fifth century, it might be suffi-

cient to leave the details of his life to adapt themselves to the circumstances of his times, according to general principles of history. But the particular crisis in which the Western world was placed when he was raised to the office of Bishop, has given rise to some confusion. In the minds of many there is no middle between an age of barbarism and one of refinement. But in truth, the line by which we may distinguish one period from another, is often arbitrary and indefinite. On the bare mention of the invasion of the barbarians, some would expect nothing but ignorance, vice, and superstition. Yet in general the most overbearing revolutions are incapable of destroying at once the great features of the manners of any period. There is a state of transition which precedes a new era, and which partakes of the characteristics of the two contending influences. The middle ages are supposed to begin with the invasion of the barbarians in the fifth century ; but whoever will consider the protracted existence of Roman institutions and manners for centuries after that time, will necessarily abate his ideas of barbarian ascendancy. The great invasion of the Goths into Gaul took place in 406, that is, twelve years *before* St. German was Bishop of Auxerre, and twenty-eight *after* his birth, consequently in the very flower of his years. Honorius, the brother of Arcadius, and the son of Theodosius the Great, was then emperor of the West. The effects of this invasion were dreadful beyond description. Its fury seems chiefly to have raged in that part of France in which Auxerre is situated. Mayence, Strasbourg, Spires, Rheims, Tournay, Arras, Amiens, situated in the north-eastern parts of that country, are noted as the objects of unlimited devastation. "The consuming flames of war," says Gibbon, "spread from the banks of the Rhine over the



greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. That rich, and extensive country, as far as the ocean, the Alps and the Pyrenees, was delivered to the barbarians, who drove before them, in a promiscuous crowd, the bishop, the senator, and the virgin, laden with the spoils of their homes and altars." Traces, it may be added, were left long after at Auxerre of the presence of these relentless invaders. But after all the accumulated circumstances of their oppression are taken into account, it still remains constant that the great bulk of the people in Gaul continued Roman in institutions, manners, language, arts, and religion. There was no indiscriminate division of the conquered lands among the conquerors, as Montesquieu has proved, and in many cases conditions were stipulated, which, while they secured the liberty of the natives, were more advantageous to the aggressors than wanton violence. Again, though we should admit the most extreme opinions concerning the multitude of the barbarian invaders, yet had they been distributed over so large a country as Gaul, their numbers would have been very inadequate for any sudden revolution. Consequently, in the first invasion of 406, it appears their sojourn in particular places was not long; and after they had exercised their wonted pillage, they moved onward without securing what they left behind. Thus Auxerre, with a large district in its vicinity, returned to the dominion of the Romans, who continued as before their magistrates and generals throughout that country. St. German himself, as we shall see, was duke and governor in obedience to Rome. The Franks seem to have been the first who took regular possession of Auxerre and the provinces around it, and in process of time it was conceded to the king of the Burgundians, *the comparative leniency of whose government is well*

known. But there was another cause not less effectual in diminishing the pernicious effects of the invasion, and which ought not to be overlooked.

The ascendancy of moral and intellectual endowments is so great, that when two hostile powers are brought into contact for any length of time, physical strength almost invariably yields in some measure to the sway of mental superiority. The Goths became a different people after they had taken possession of Gaul. The court of Toulouse rivalled that of Ravenna in the protection of literature and arts, and in the elegance of its forms. "The odious name of conquerors," says Gibbon again, "was softened into the mild and friendly appellation of the *guests* of the Romans ; and the barbarians of Gaul repeatedly declared, that they were bound to the people by the ties of hospitality, and to the emperor by the duty of allegiance and military service. The title of Honorius and his successors, their laws, and their civil magistrates, were still respected in the provinces of Gaul, of which they had resigned the possession to the barbarian allies ; and the kings, who exercised a supreme and independent authority over their native subjects, ambitiously solicited the more honourable rank of master-generals of the imperial armies. Such was the involuntary reverence which the Roman name still impressed on the minds of those warriors who had borne away in triumph the spoils of the Capitol." The south of France moreover it must be remembered, continued long in the possession of the Romans. It comprehended what was called Septimania, or the Seven Provinces, of which Arles was the seat of Government. There the Pretorian Prefect of all Gaul had his residence. The vicinity of this strong-hold of

old Roman civilization and splendour tended not a little to soften the barbarians throughout the land.

As a general fact, the invasion of the barbarians produced an undoubted decay in the cultivation of letters, and Sidonius Apollinaris<sup>1</sup> deploras, in his letters many years after, the neglect into which the schools of learning were falling. Without stopping to observe that the attainments of St. German himself would not be affected by this circumstance, since his education must have been completed many years before the invasion, the expressions of Sidonius are to be understood with great limitations. There were many like himself who had enjoyed all the advantages of a liberal education, Faustus of Riez,<sup>2</sup> Claudian Mamertus, Lupus, Constantius, Probus, and many others. The study of classical literature was still the great resource of the higher classes, and very frequently the disturbance of the times instead of diverting men from intellectual pleasures, was the occasion of their popularity. Ferreolus and Apollinaris, two distinguished persons, who had retired from public life on account of the impossibility of adapting high principles to the proceedings of state affairs, would thus naturally consider their libraries, as one of the chief ornaments and resources of their magnificent seats, where the danger of indulging in political conversations would be compensated by the freedom with which literary characters were canvassed. Not only all the writings of antiquity which have come to our knowledge were familiar to persons of education, but authors are alluded to by them which are totally unknown to us. Moreover schools had been established in Gaul so early as Tiberius's reign ; the study of the

<sup>1</sup> B. II. Lett. x. p. 172.

<sup>2</sup> *Sidon. Ep. iv. l. p. 313.* See also Anquetil, tom. I. p. 221.

sciences had been encouraged by several edicts from successive Emperors ; and by degrees that country had become the seat of learning and talent. The author of St. German's life mentions his attendance at the Auditoria Gallicana, or Gallic schools, and we learn from St. Jerome that at the same time the liberal arts were in the most flourishing condition in Gaul. The principal universities (for such they seem to have been) were at Treves, Bordeaux, Autun, Toulouse, Lyons, Marseilles, and other great towns. Their importance may be estimated by the attention paid to them by the government. Repeated edicts were issued for their advantage. An extract from that of Gratian in the year 376, only two years before St. German's birth, is too interesting to be omitted.

“ Gratian Augustus to Antony, Pretorian Prefect of all Gaul.

“ In the great cities, which belong to the district committed to your<sup>1</sup> Magnificence, and which are distinguished for professors of learning, the most accomplished must preside at the education of the youth ; whether teachers of rhetoric or grammar in the Grecian and Roman languages. The orators<sup>2</sup> are to receive from the treasury the salary of twenty four measures ; and the Greek and Latin grammarians, according to custom, may be content with twelve measures. In order also that those cities, which claim metropolitan privileges, may have the choice of professors, (inasmuch as each town may not be enabled to pay sufficiently for masters and instructors,) we intend to add something for the advantage of Treves ; and enjoin that thirty measures

<sup>1</sup> The titles bestowed upon the various officers of the Empire was a point of great nicety, in the fourth and fifth centuries.

<sup>2</sup> The orators here are the same as the professors of rhetoric.

be granted to the professor of rhetoric, twenty Latin, and twelve to the Greek, ~~in the~~ grammar.

It is no contradiction to what has been said, that the general taste had very much degenerated since the Augustan age. The fact indeed cannot be denied, though opinion as to its extent and application, may vary according to the prejudices of individuals. But the taste of an age is not a certain criterion of the condition of learning and science. It sometimes happens that the greatest diffusion of knowledge is not accompanied with an equal degree of judgment and refinement. But whatever symptoms of decay may have been perceptible in the public schools of Western Europe, they were more than counterbalanced by the ardour and industry which was bestowed upon theological studies. And it is very probable that the true cause of those complaints to which Sidonius Apollinaris gave vent concerning the neglect of learning, arose more from the distaste of Pagan literature which the institution of Christianity produced, than from the immediate influence of the barbarians. Do what they would, to use a familiar expression, the greatest votaries of classical pursuits, were finally compelled to follow the tide of opinion, or rather were themselves alienated from a subject which corresponded so imperfectly with the new sympathies of their nature. The author just quoted, so skilled in poetical art, so successful in elegant composition, himself grew weary of his former occupations, and devoted the latter years of his life to the deeper studies of a Christian Bishop. Claudian Mamertus, a man of considerable genius, was famous for his philosophical attainments, yet to him was the Church indebted for very different services in Christian *doctrine, and the introduction of a more perfect system*

of psalmody and public worship.<sup>1</sup> In fact the whole energy of Europe was concentrated upon one object : the new Faith which had lately taken possession of the nations and brought at last the imperial power into its obedience. Gaul was not behind other countries in giving evidence of the zeal which had been kindled. Christian literature became the general subject of interest. Commentaries on the sacred scriptures, treatises on ecclesiastical offices, practical exhortations, expositions of orthodox doctrine, occupied the attention of all. Foremost stood the monks of Lerins, in their labours for the truth. Lerins was an island to the south of France, where St. Honoratus had founded a monastery after the example of Cassian, and Cassian had lately brought over from Egypt the monastic system and established it at St. Victor in Marseilles. These two settlements proved the seat of religious and intellectual activity. Many of the eminent writers of the time were there brought up. Besides the two distinguished founders just mentioned, Vincentius surnamed Lirinensis, St. Hilary, St. Lupus, Faustus, and others, had been disciplined by the rule of Lerins. These were contemporaries of St. German, and in all probability well acquainted with him ; two we have positive evidence of having been his friends, St. Hilary of Arles, and St. Lupus of Troyes. But there is a peculiar circumstance connected with these monastic houses, which tended greatly to promote religious studies in Gaul. This was, as is well known, the contest which had been awakened throughout Christendom between the sectaries of Pelagius and the Church. No country took a more ardent part in the struggle than Gaul, and no particular spot centered in itself so much controversial warmth as

<sup>1</sup> See Sidon. Ep. iv. 11.

Lerins. Times of religious controversy are probably the most conspicuous for the energetic display of the moral and intellectual faculties. Discussions on abstract questions of philosophy, or even on subjects of political interest do not always avail to rouse the feelings of mankind in general. One country, one city, one school, often absorbs all the sympathy which they excite. But when religion and the interests of the soul, are the subjects of debate, the sparks of human energy are kindled as by a charm and spread with the rapidity of an electric fluid. Opinions work upon actions, and actions re-act upon opinions ; the defence of truth or error, stirs up the moral powers and leads men on to deeds of vigour, the character of which depends on the principle which first gave birth to them ; again the effects of active zeal reflect upon the opinions and systems of men, and raise them to those heights of speculative and logical abstraction which are the wonder of beholders, and the enigma of future generations. This was remarkably exemplified in the age of St. German. Theology was beginning to assume that systematic shape which it maintained and developed during successive ages. The attacks of heretics directed against every part of orthodox doctrine, at one time impugning the articles of faith, at another the canons of discipline and order, had exercised the arms of the Catholics. They had learnt by encountering so many various sects, the analogy of the Faith, and at the same time the connexion of error. Hence they were enabled to dig more deeply round the foundations of Christianity, and to anticipate the introduction of false teaching, by advancing to the abstruse and ultimate principles of all religion.

## CHAPTER II.

*St. German's Youth.*

ST. GERMAN was born at Auxerre in the Diocese of the Archbishop of Sens, probably about the year 378. Gratian was Emperor of the West, and Valens of the East. The following year Theodosius the Great came to the throne of Constantinople.<sup>1</sup>

Little is known of his early years. Constantius, his original biographer, informs us that his parents were of noble rank. Their names were Rusticus and Germanilla, and long after their death their memory was preserved at Auxerre, where German had erected a chapel over their remains.<sup>2</sup> There is no authority however for considering them in the light of canonized Saints. It is certain they attended carefully to the education of their son ; and from the silence of ancient writers, one might infer he was an only son. This however is not necessary to account for the excellence of his education ; it never was a feature of the Roman character to neglect the education of the youth ; and those of noble birth were in the fourth and fifth centuries as careful on this subject as they might have been in Cicero's time. Consequently German was instructed in the seven liberal arts, Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Music, Arithmetic, Geometry and Astronomy. The progress he made in them was proportioned to the abilities and judgment with which nature had endued him. To enter profoundly into the study of any, or

<sup>1</sup> Art de Vérifier les Dates. tom. I. p. 396. Anquetil. tom. I. p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> Hericus de Mir. ch. II. 19.



to arrive at equal information in all, was not the object of this preparatory course, or, as Eusebius calls it, *encyclic* instruction.<sup>1</sup> Exclusive attention to any particular branch of learning, was reserved for a subsequent period, when the youth were sent to the Universities, which, as we have seen, were in a very flourishing condition at this time. Law was that which was marked out for German. The knowledge and even profession of the Law, was almost necessary for the young pretenders to dignities and offices. It does not appear to have incapacitated them from bearing arms, and the two professions were not unfrequently united in the same person.<sup>2</sup> But it was the Career of the Pleader which was emphatically called the "Nursery of Honours."<sup>3</sup> "Hardly, says a contemporary writer, were the suits of the barrister at an end, than his titles and dignities began."<sup>4</sup> We cannot be surprised at this, when we remember the important part which eloquence held in the Roman constitution. The corruption again of manners would afford a larger scope for the talents of the Pleader, than is possible in a well regulated state; and though the public acuteness and discernment would naturally progress as the art became more refined, yet would there be numerous occasions where the wit of one man might divert the minds of the judges into the channel he wished. Full proof of this fact is to be found in the records of the age.<sup>5</sup>

What danger however was involved in the state of life to which German was destined, he would have met

<sup>1</sup> Τῶν εγκυκλίων παιδεία Book vi. ch. 2. see Valesius's learned note.

<sup>2</sup> See Sidon Apoll. Lib. xi. B. i. p. 58, and his Life.

<sup>3</sup> "Seminarium dignitatum," Nov. Theod. xxxiv.

<sup>4</sup> Sid. Apoll. B. i. Lett. xi. p. 60.

<sup>5</sup> See Sid. Ap. B. ii. Lett. v. and B. ii. Lett. vii.

with considerable advantage. He was a Christian, and his parents were Christians. He lived in a place adorned by holy Bishops, from whom all that spiritual care, which parents are insufficient to bestow, was to be expected. The Sacraments to which laymen are admitted would have been early offered to him, though we have no direct intimation of it. For it was considered so important a neglect in Novatian, that after the Baptism he received on the bed of sickness, which the ancients called Clinical baptism, he had not sought for confirmation at the hands of the Bishop,<sup>1</sup> that Pope Cornelius doubted whether he had been partaker of the Holy Ghost ; and it was made the ground of a serious opposition to his admission into the Priesthood. But we do not find that objection was raised against German at a subsequent period when elevated to the Bishopric, on the score of any such omission. Nor would he have been deprived of that Christian instruction, which the catechetical schools of the primitive Church afforded. A part so essential of ecclesiastical discipline, must have held at Auxerre as in the rest of Christendom, the place which was due to it. The five Bishops who have governed the Church of Auxerre before St. German's accession, have all been honoured by posterity as Saints. And we may safely infer that the flock which they tended, possessed all the spiritual advantages which the Church can furnish.

It was under these circumstances that German went to Rome to complete his education and enter into public life. Rome was at that time, what Paris was in the middle ages, the University of Universities, or, as it was called, the " Home of jurisprudence, and the school

<sup>1</sup> Ἐν αὐτῇ τῇ κλίνῃ περιχυθεὶς ἔλαβεν. Euseb. B. vi. 43 ch.

of letters.”<sup>1</sup> In the thirteenth century an illustrious Italian was known to seek for knowledge in France; but in the fourth, the native of Gaul repaired to Rome in order to give the last finish to his studies.<sup>2</sup> Thither flocked from all quarters of the empire numbers of students, the occupations of whom attracted the special notice of Government. They were obliged to enter their names in the registers, to present testimonials of their birth-place and quality, and to declare what studies they intended to follow. Lodgings were assigned to them, and officers, called *Censuales*, were appointed to make an inspection into their lives, and to see that they avoided clubs or associations, and attendance on public sports and entertainments. If any were found faulty, they were to be punished, and sent away home. But none were permitted to stay at Rome after twenty, lest the splendour and vanities of the city should tempt them to forsake the service of their country.<sup>3</sup> Besides a large number of private teachers, there were public professors appointed, who had their schools in the area of the Capitol. Notwithstanding this discipline, among the great temptations which Rome presented, German would naturally require the antidote of early habits of restraint, and experience the benefit of those precepts which he had learnt of his parents and Bishop. His character indeed had not as yet the mark of deep holiness; rather it appeared of an unformed kind; like many of his own age, he would seek to enjoy life, and yet shrink from transgressing the dictates of conscience. But where pleasure is constantly before the eyes, the

<sup>1</sup> Sid. Ap. B. i. Litt. 6. p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> See Villemain. *Littérature*, on Dante.

<sup>3</sup> See Stillingfleet's *Origines*. p. 215. Ed. 1840.—See also a *letter of St. Jerome to Rusticus*.

conscience may soon lose its discernment, unless directed by special circumstances. German's sojourn at Rome has been left in obscurity by his biographers, and we might fear for the consequences of his residence in so corrupt a city.<sup>1</sup> Yet nothing has been transmitted which could throw any blame upon his morals or general character, except what might be involved in carelessness with regard to religious duties, and fondness for juvenile sports. Still such were the temptations which especially then surrounded the Christian in Rome, and in every large city of the empire, that public amusements, which are never without their dangers, were poison in themselves to those who joined in them. The majority of Christians nevertheless did indulge in them, and the best that can be said of this practice is, that the intention might be innocent at first. "Behold, says Salvian, innumerable thousands of Christians resort daily to the impure representations of the Theatres." The theatres and games were but the continuance of the old Pagan custom aggravated by the depravity of imperial manners, and no baptized person, says the same author, could attend them without offering plain violence to the oath of his initiation. Any one may easily convince himself of this fact by the numerous accounts left by ancient Christian authors, St. Augustine, St. Cyprian, Tertullian and Salvian. So great however was the force of example, that the circus and theatres were crowded by those who might have been joining in the solemn services of the Church. "If it should happen, as it does indeed frequently, that the same day an ecclesi-

<sup>1</sup> St. Jerome in his early years, not long before, had experienced the dangers of Rome, and was haunted ever after with the painful recollection of them. Vid. Fleury, Lib. xvii. § 3.—See also the interesting poem of Chateaubriand: *Les Martyrs*.

astical festival be observed and public games announced, I ask all candid persons which place attracts the most Christians, the stalls of the theatre, or the House of God?—Nay, if the day of the Funeral games (*Feralia Ludicra*) occur at the same time as a feast of the Church, not only do they who call themselves Christians not come to Church, but if any unawares should have come, and hear suddenly that the games are going on while they are in Church, immediately they take their departure.”<sup>1</sup>

However it is remarkable how guarded the expressions are which afford any clue to his life previous to his conversion. “The austerities of his future years, we are told, were sufficient to efface his past errors, *if he had committed any*, and render him who *perhaps* had been exposed to sin, the pattern of virtue.”<sup>2</sup> This deserves particular consideration; for whereas on one hand, much instruction is to be gained from the history of persons who have lived long under the influence of Satan and the world, and afterwards have been turned to God, and passed the latter part of their lives in penitence and deeds of amendment; so on the other it is useful to remark that uncommon religious fervour in later years, need not be introduced by a youth of dissipation and vice, as the proverbial saying might seem to imply: “The greater the sinner, the greater the Saint.” If this popular phrase can bear any good sense, it must be taken to mean that those who have been great sinners, must double their endeavours after holiness, in order to reach the level of the just and make amends for past transgressions. In early times it was a source of lasting bitterness to have sullied the white garments

<sup>1</sup> Salvian p. p. 127, 131, 133. Ed. Baluzii.

<sup>2</sup> Constantius C. ii. § 12.

of baptism, though the rigours of penance had restored the sinner to God's favour.

However if students were obliged to return to their countries at the age of twenty, German must have left Rome before any durable impression could be made on his disposition. About this time he entered upon the public duties of his profession, probably in his own country, Gaul, and distinguished himself in an especial manner before the tribunals of the Prefect. He accordingly did not wait long to lay aside the Toga, (which was the name for the Lawyer's habit, and from which the whole class were called *Togati*;) and he was soon invested with the insignia of an administrative charge. It is uncertain what the first office was to which he was promoted. A later writer says he was Censor,<sup>1</sup> but his authority is insufficient. Soon however he rose to one of the highest dignities in the Empire; he was appointed Duke and Governor of the Provinces.

Not to mention the numerous subdivisions of offices, there were three distinct gradations in the government of the provinces represented by the Prefect, the Governor, and the Magistrate. The first had the administration of an entire province, the second that of a part only, the third the superintendence of a city or small district. In the last persecution which preceded the establishment of Christianity, the edict of Maximin, the Emperor, had been in the first place addressed to the Prefect; then it was the part of the Prefect, to transmit its contents to the governors of the provinces<sup>2</sup> who in their turn were enjoined to communicate the imperial orders to the various magistrates of parti-

<sup>1</sup> Hericus.

<sup>2</sup> οἱ κατ' ἔθνος ἡγούμενοι, or οἱ κατ' ἐπαρχίας.—Euseb. Lib. ix. ch. i.

cular places.<sup>1</sup> It was to the second of these stations that German was raised; the importance of it was great, for he appears to have had the government of the Armorican and Nervican Districts, which comprehended what was called at that time the first and second Aquitain, the province of Sens, and the second and third Lugdunensis, a tract of land which extended nearly from the banks of the Rhine, to the shores of the Atlantic. The title of Duke which was attached to his office,<sup>2</sup> had lost its etymological sense of a charge only military, and was identical with that of governor to all appearance, although naturally he would have commanded the service of the troops. Superior to him in the provinces, were the Pretorian Prefect of all Gaul, and the vice-prefect or Vicarius of Gaul, strictly so called. The whole of the Roman Empire was divided into four Prefectures, the East, Illyria, Italy and Gaul. The Prefecture of Gaul included Britain, Spain and Gaul. Consequently the Prefect had a power equal almost to that of the sovereign. His residence was first at Treves, but during the episcopate of German, it was fixed at Arles in the south of France. Under him were three Vicarii,<sup>3</sup> whose authority must have been little inferior to that of the Prefect himself; there was one in each of the three great divisions, Britain, Spain, and Gaul. They must have been in fact the great check upon the Prefect's power, for they were not properly his ministers, but

<sup>1</sup> λογισταί, στρατηγοί and præpositi.

<sup>2</sup> Thus in Euseb. ix. 4. mention is made of a *στρατοπειδαρχής* (different from the *στρατηγός* or magistrate) *ὃν Δούκα* (Duke) *Ῥωμαῖοι προσαγορεύουσι*, and the Codex Theod. says: "Ducis et Præsidis simul officio quandoque idem functus." "Idem Dux et Corrector Provinciarum. Notitia Dignitatum."

<sup>3</sup> See Sirmondus, Note I. to Litt. 2. B. I. Sidonius.

were appointed by the Emperor, and their office was accordingly considered *sacred*,<sup>1</sup> like that of their superior. Next to these came the Dukes or Governors of the provinces, to the number of twelve in the west, one of whom was German. Before he reached this high post, he had married Eustachia, a lady eminent for her birth and wealth, as well as for her good qualities ; nothing is known concerning her, except that subsequently when German was ordained, she changed the character of wife, for that of his spiritual sister.

In all these circumstances of St. German's secular career, it would seem that he had been providentially prepared for the ecclesiastical dignity he was afterwards to hold. By the study of eloquence, which his early profession required, he had learnt the art of communicating his thoughts freely to any assembly of men, an acquisition which proved valuable in the exercise of his episcopal duties ; for though on occasions, or even throughout his future life, he may have been supernaturally guided by the Holy Spirit in his intercourse with others, yet it is impossible to say how far what we call natural instruments, are rendered subservient to the ends of God, or whether He ever dispenses with them, or whether there is not an antecedent absurdity, involved in any of those distinctions, which are founded on man's short sighted inductions, the whole theory of human ideas being of a nature so inconceivable. Again, German's acquaintance with jurisprudence, was of the greatest importance to his pastoral office, and enabled him to meet those numerous legal emergencies which are common enough now, but in the fifth century engrossed, in a special manner, the attention of the Bishop. "The Bishop, says a modern

<sup>1</sup> *Sacrâ vice.*



historian,<sup>1</sup> was become in each town the natural head of the people, and in fact the mayor. His election and the interest it awakened were the great events of the city. It was chiefly by means of the Clergy that the Roman laws and customs were preserved in the towns, from which they were afterwards drawn for the general legislature of the state." It were easy to object against this consideration, that the career of the law was very generally adopted, as has been observed, and that if German was called from a secular profession to a religious office, it is not necessary to seek for a providential intervention to account for the advantages just mentioned. Two thirds of the laity, it might be said, were skilled in oratory and jurisprudence, and it would be more extraordinary that German should be ignorant with regard to them than the reverse. Again it may be objected, that transitions from a secular life to the ecclesiastical ministry were almost an every day's occurrence. The fact is not denied; and since the invasion of the Goths, they had become still more frequent. "If there is no strength in the republic, said an author of the same age,<sup>2</sup> no protection; if the Emperor's supplies are at an end, the nobility have resolved either to abandon their country or to assume the Tonsure," which was the mark of ecclesiastical profession. But after all, the dictates of gratitude towards the moral Governor of the world may have their foundation in the reality of things, though the events which are the immediate occasion, have in them apparently nothing extraordinary or contrary to the expectations of men. Effects are contained in causes, and effects virtually imply causes; if effects are good, on the sup-

<sup>1</sup> Guizot. *Essais*. Ed. Charpentier, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Sidon Apoll. B. II. Lett. I.

position of a benevolent Author of all things, the causes must not only be good, but providential. In strict truth those occurrences which are most common, are as miraculous and providential as those which appear strange to our apprehensions. How can our conceptions grasp the real nature of any thing ? How can we understand the relations, the causes, the ends, the means, which constitute the reality of things ? Happy coincidences are but the instrument of awakening our perceptions of God's righteous government, they are not the first link of a wise chain of circumstances. Still they are the just ground of gratitude to God, since they both involve the eternal causes of things, and are the development of the excellent and harmonious designs of Him who is the Fountain of all wisdom and goodness.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### *The Church of Auxerre.*

ONE of the districts of German's department was Auxerre. And there he resided. At the time he held the office of Governor, St. Amator was bishop of the town. Amator was the fifth bishop since an episcopal See had been founded there at the introduction of Christianity into that part of Gaul.

St. Peregrine, in the middle of the third century, was sent by Pope Sixtus the second, at the request of a few Christians at Auxerre ; and preached the gospel to the Pagans who formed the bulk of the population. He built a small Church at one of the gates of the town, called the Gate of the Baths, because it was near the river Yonne where Baths were erected. This

was probably the time when seven Bishops were sent through Gaul in the Decian persecution, who accomplished the conversion of that nation, although a great number of Pagans remained till a very late period.<sup>1</sup> Some provinces however had Christian Churches long before ; those of Marseilles, Lyons, Vienne, were flourishing in the time of Domitian, as Irenæus shows. St. Peregrine, after he had accomplished his Apostolic task at Auxerre, removed to other pagan districts, and finally obtained the palm of martyrdom at Baugy in Burgundy, during a persecution which was raised against the Christians. We shall again have occasion to revert to this Saint, and the circumstances of his life. His memory is honoured on the 16th of May. St. Marcellianus was his successor in the Episcopate, and after him St. Valerian, who was present at the Councils of Sardica and Cologne, in the years 347, and 349. At his death in 366, St. Eladius governed the Church of Auxerre, and was succeeded by St. Amator in 388, who, as has been observed, was Bishop, while German was Governor.

This illustrious person, who holds such a conspicuous part in the history of German, was the only son of Proclides, and his wife Ursiciola.<sup>2</sup> His father constrained him to marry Martha, a native of Langres, in

<sup>1</sup> The authors of the *Gallia Christiana* make a singular mistake in placing the persecution of Domitian in the third century. It was the persecution of Decius.

See Anquetil. France, tom. i. p. 170. Some say that nine Missionaries were sent by the Apostolic See into Gaul. Saturninus to Toulouse; Trophimus to Arles; Paul to Narbonne; Stremonius to Clermont; Martial to Limoges; Gratian to Tours; Peregrine to Auxerre; Savinian to Sens; Dionysius to Paris. See Tillemont, tom. iv. *Mém.* 480.

<sup>2</sup> *Isiciala* in Gall. Chr. but *Ursiciola* in Tillemont.

Champagne, in order to leave the riches of the family to natural heirs. St. Valerian, who was then Bishop, was desired to give the nuptial blessing. However, Amator, who had profited by the spiritual counsels of the Bishop, after the ceremony, determined to live a life of virginity, and accordingly communicated his intention to Martha, who adopted a similar resolution. After the death of his father, not content with this secret vow, he applied to St. Eladius, the successor of St. Valerian, and made public profession of continence, on which occasion he received the Tonsure and was ordained Deacon, while Martha was enlisted among the women who consecrated themselves to God. They did not however part from each other, and in this imitated the example of St. Paulinus and St. Therasia, and many others.<sup>1</sup> It was not unlikely that envy should take occasion of this circumstance ; and in fact, after Amator became Bishop, Licinius, his Archdeacon, with others, endeavoured to attack his character ; but God took upon Himself the part of vindicating his innocence, and punished severely his accusers, who had carried

<sup>1</sup> According to Stephanus, the African, in the sixth century, there was ecclesiastical sanction for the practice of the minor Clergy living in the same house with their wives, and partaking of the same table. But when they attained to a superior order, it was not lawful ; whether Priests came under this limitation does not appear. P. 55. Boll. ad Mai. I. Tillemont, however, does not attach much credit to this author. See notes at the end of tom. xv. Eccl. Mém.

In Constantius we find a Presbyter living in the same house with his wife, Senator and Nectariola.

St. Aug. Cons. Evang. lib. ii. “Hoc enim exemplo (Mariæ et Joseph) magnificè insinuatur fidelibus conjugatis etiam, servatâ pari consensu continentîâ, posse permanere vocarique conjugium, non permixto corporis sensu, sed custodito mentis affectu.

their profane curiosity so far as to penetrate into his bed-chamber. Shortly after Martha died, and was buried at the Mons Autricus, which was the great Cemetery in the vicinity of Auxerre, where the three Bishops, Marcellianus, Valerian, and Eladius, were likewise buried.

The author of Amator's life,<sup>1</sup> who lived in the sixth century, and had opportunity to obtain correct information concerning him, relates, that while Amator was still Deacon, a lady of rank, called Palladia, entered the Church on Easter-day dressed in a costly manner. She had been married to a rich Pagan called Heraclius, of Ædua or Autun, and had subsequently turned Christian, though her husband remained a heathen. "When the sacrifice was ended,"<sup>2</sup> the author continues, "and she had received the holy Eucharist in bread, she advanced towards Amator, who, as Deacon, was appointed to administer the cup to the faithful as the confirmation of the communion." But he rejected her and bid her depart, because she was splendidly dressed, and had not withheld intercourse with her husband to prepare for so solemn a feast. Pricked to the heart at this public reproof, she went home and related to her husband what had happened, and urged him to take vengeance on the Deacon. While they were designing the death of Amator, they both fell dangerously ill. At last, conscious of the Divine wrath, they set off in a carriage, (for they were too exhausted

<sup>1</sup> Stephanus, an African priest, whose work is found in the Boll. ad Mai. i. p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> *Perfecto itaque sacrificio, dum Eucharistiæ libamina Sanguinis quoque haustu confirmare voluisset, accessit ad beatissimum Amatorem, tunc Diaconum, qui sacratissimum Calicem in vitam æternam populis porrigebat.*

to walk) and when they found the Deacon, threw themselves at his feet, and entreated his pardon for the bad purposes they had entertained. Amator readily complied, and having sent for a Priest, he had Heraclius, the lady's husband, baptized, and then with oil that he himself had blessed, anointed them, calling on the name of the Lord, and healed them.

Amator succeeded to Eladius in 388, on Monday, the 27th of March, and governed the Diocese of Auxerre for thirty years, during which he effected a great reformation by his preaching, and performed a number of miracles. There was still much Paganism in that part of Gaul, notwithstanding the efforts of the preceding Bishops; and we must not consider Amator in his position when first he entered on his Episcopal duties, in the same light with subsequent Bishops, or again with Prelates of our own time. Power was still in the hands of the heathen, though the seat of the empire had declared for Christianity, and probably multitudes preferred the gorgeous display of Pagan rites, to the more simple ceremonies of Christians. Accordingly it was with difficulty that ground was obtained for building Churches,<sup>1</sup> the number of which was very small. However as the zeal of Amator converted many of the Gentiles, it became necessary to obtain space for religious worship. He therefore applied to a wealthy citizen named Ruptilius, for a large house which he possessed within the town. Ruptilius at first refused, but having fallen sick, he was compelled to resign it. Amator then turned it into a Church, and dedicated it on the 3rd of October. This is the Church which was afterwards celebrated as that of St. Stephen, and stood where the present Cathedral is situated. We shall see

<sup>1</sup> See *Steph. Amat. Vita* and *Hericus Mirac.* B. i. ch. 3.

that St. German was afterwards ordained Priest and elected Bishop in the same, and that Amator there breathed his last, surrounded by his flock. In 600, Didier, Bishop of the place, enlarged it, and dedicated it afresh on the 19th of April.<sup>1</sup> And in 1215, William, likewise Bishop of Auxerre, had it pulled down and restored on a more magnificent scale. While Amator was building, a large sum of money was found in the house, which he sent to Ruptilius, the former owner; but it was refused by him, and returned for the benefit of the poor and the repairs of the Church.

Among the miracles which are related of St. Amator, he is said to have put to flight the evil spirits which occupied the public burial place on the Mons Autricus; to have restored sight to the blind, the use of their limbs to the cripple and paralytic, nay, even life to the dead; and to have stopped a conflagration which threatened to reduce the city to ashes.<sup>2</sup> Without stopping to examine the evidence on which these accounts rest, and to consider the degree of authority due to Stephen the African, who is the chief witness to them, it may be observed that there is no antecedent improbability in them, since we shall find that St. German performed greater and more miracles some time after, and that the testimony which has handed them down, is allowed by learned critics to be of the most authentic and trustworthy nature.

During Amator's episcopate took place the invasion of the Goths, to which allusion has already been made. There is no distinct relation of the measure in which Auxerre suffered during the invasion, except what is involved in the vague expressions of St. Jerome and

<sup>1</sup> See Gallia Christ. 262. and Tillemont, t. xv.

<sup>2</sup> See Heric. de Mir. Tillemont, tom. xv.

Orosius. However one victim of the barbarian's fury, as is supposed, a native of that city, and a child, has been preserved in the memory of posterity among the Acts of martyrs.<sup>1</sup> When the head of St. Just, (for so he was called,) was brought to his mother who resided at Auxerre, the house in which it was bestowed, was seen to spread forth a bright light. St. Amator having perceived it as he rose up to say his nightly office, inquired the cause of it, and upon learning what had happened, returned thanks to God for the honour of this martyrdom during his episcopate; after which he gave orders for a public procession, and deposited the head of St. Just, in the place destined for its sepulture. This account, if it may not with more probability be referred to the persecution of Maximian a century before, according to the poetical narrative found among Bede's works, seems to prove that the effects of the invasion were felt at least in the neighbourhood of Auxerre, though there is no positive account of any siege of that town. At a later period it is certain that the barbarians occupied the place, for there was an interval of ten years, during which the succession of the Bishops was suspended by the Goths.<sup>2</sup> But for the details of the first invasions between 406 and 409, we can only draw inferences. St. Jerome says,<sup>3</sup> "Innumerable and savage nations have occupied *the whole of Gaul. Whatever is situated between the Alps and the Pyrenees, the Ocean and the Rhine*, is laid waste by the Quadi, Vandals, Sarmatians, Alani, Gepides, Heruli, Saxons, Burgundians, Alemanni and Pannonians.—Mayence, that noble city, has been taken

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Tillemont, tom. xv.

<sup>2</sup> See Hericus Prologue to the De Miracul. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ep. cxxiii. ad Ageruchiam. Ed. Venet. tom. i. 914.



and sacked, and thousands have perished in her Church. Worms, after a long siege, has been utterly destroyed. The powerful towns of Rheims, Amiens and Arras, have been the prey of their fury. Terouenne, Tournay, Spire, and Strasburg, are converted into German provinces. Aquitain, Novempopulania, Lugdunensis, Narbonensis, with the exception of very few towns, have been entirely pillaged, &c." There is reason to think Auxerre would be included in the general name of Lugdunensis, the limits of which are so imperfectly defined. And the course of the barbarians from Rheims to Toulouse, where they ultimately settled, would naturally be directed through the Diocese which Amator governed.

Such was the condition of the Church in which German was born, the Bishop whose influence balanced his own, and the succession which he was afterwards to take up.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

##### *St. Amator and St. German.*

LIKE all the great men in Gaul, German had his country seat. It was not far from Auxerre; and thither he frequently retired, to indulge in the amusement of hunting. Hunting at all times has been a favourite sport of the rich, and was then as popular with the Romans as with the Goths, to whose nature and habits it was especially congenial.<sup>1</sup> The duties of his office, often obliged him to visit remote districts;

<sup>1</sup> See Sidon. Apoll. Lett. 3. B. iii. Lett. 2. B. i. Lett. 9. B. iv. Lett. 21. B. iv. Lett. 8. B. v.

at he was at his native place, when an incident, apparently trivial, connected with this same sport, was the instrument in God's hands, of giving an entire change to his life.

In the middle of the city, we are told, there was a large pear tree, an object of reverence to the inhabitants, both for its antiquity and its size. Ostentation prompted German to bring the spoils of the chase to the town, and hang them upon the favourite tree. This repeated practice gave offence to Amator. Some superstition was allied in the minds of the Pagans with the skulls of the animals, which German exposed in the public place, and which they called *Oscilla*.<sup>1</sup> The Christian profession of German, ought not to allow him, thought Amator, to foster the remains of heathenism, which his own efforts had tended so much to extirpate. It was an encouragement to the Pagans to continue those practises expressly denounced in Holy Scripture : "To sacrifice upon the tops of mountains, and burn incense upon the hills, *under oaks, and poplars, and elms, because the shadow thereof is good.*" (*Hosea* vi. 13.) He therefore presented himself before the civil governor, and addressed him thus : "Cease, I entreat you, to indulge this empty jesting, for it is a stumbling block to Christians, and a satisfaction to Heathens. Such practices belong to the worship of idols, not to the true religion of Christ." These admonitions, though often repeated, were lost upon German. Nor was it the power of an evil habit alone, which confirmed him in his disobedience ; Amator knew he was urged by a foolish feeling of vanity and worldly honour ; he there-

<sup>1</sup> See Const. Vit. Germ. Tillemont. xv. t. p. 8. Canons of St. Boniface.

fore desired him to cut down the tree itself, which gave occasion to the scandal ; but all was vain.

One day when German had retired to his country place, Amator took his opportunity, and had the tree cut down to the very roots and burnt. The skulls he ordered to be cast away without the city. When the Governor heard what he had done, he was filled with wrath, and thinking his dignity exposed, as well as his vanity offended, he so far forgot the nature of that religion, to whose blessed sacraments and graces he had been admitted,<sup>1</sup> that he threatened death to the author of the deed. During the heat of his indignation he set off for Auxerre, accompanied by a large body of men. He knew well that the inhabitants would rise up with one accord to defend their holy Bishop. The news of his intention however reached Amator before his arrival. Upon hearing which he exclaimed : "No, it is not possible that so unworthy a man as myself, should bear witness with my blood to my Saviour." Martyrdom indeed was not granted to him, though none was more able to suffer all things for Christ. Far otherwise did Almighty God dispose events. It was revealed to the Bishop that his departure from this life was at hand, but that the very man who persecuted him would shortly succeed him in the See of Auxerre. Instigated by this divine admonition, he did not wait for German's arrival, but set off to *Ædua* or *Augustodunum*, now called *Autun*, to have an interview with *Julius the Prefect of Gaul*,<sup>2</sup> who was then making a

<sup>1</sup> "Ritu atque munere insignitus." Const. Tillemont, tom. xv. p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> The Prefect of Gaul, in a public edict this year, 418, is called *Agricola*, we must therefore either suppose him to have been called by both names, as was common, or that one of the two

nsitory sojourn in that city, his usual residence being Arles.

St. Simplicius was then Bishop of Autun. Second the name, he was one of that bright cluster of holy elates which then adorned the land, and did justice, ys our authority, to his auspicious name by his igleness of heart and childlike spirit. Hearing of mator's approach, he went out to meet him with his ergy. The same respect was shown by the Prefect ilius, who, attended by a large suite, advanced to elcome him. After they had exchanged the usual lutations, Amator was led to the city with all the monstrations of reverence, which his character and tion commanded. Times have changed, and manners th them, and though genuine holiness must ever call rth the expression of the respect and love which it oduces, yet the Saint does not meet with that recep- on now, which he did in the fifth century,—shall we y even from barbarians. But to adhere closely to the iginal testimony of these precious customs at the risk repetition ; the following day, Amator expressed his sh to visit the Prefect at the Pretorium, as was lled the abode of the supreme magistrate. Where- on Julius hastened to meet him on his way, and with l the indefinable tokens of one who could distinguish e intrinsic dignity of the Christian priesthood, from e mere outward honours it possessed, he first guided e Bishop to his palace, and then humbly requested s blessing. After Amator had blessed him, he thus dressed him : “ The Lord has informed me of my proaching end, and as there is no one fit to undertake

and lately succeeded the other ; or again, that this Julius was not eflect of all Gaul, but Vicarius of Gaul. See the Boll. note . locum *Constantii*.

the superintendence of the Church but the most illustrious<sup>1</sup> German, I desire your eminence to allow me to confer the Tonsure on him. For such is the revelation which the Lord my God has deigned to communicate to me." The Prefect answered that German was indeed useful and even necessary to the republic, but since God had chosen him, he durst not oppose His commands, and therefore gave his consent.

No change could be made in the administration of Gaul without the Prefect's leave. Except the office of the Vicarius, all public charges were dependent upon his authority. German's was of this number, and he could not quit his post without commission from the supreme governor. This will explain what might seem strange in Amator's conduct. To influence German's mind and obtain his submission, he knew well was God's part; the ordinary methods of conciliation and intercourse were precluded by the hostile attempt just made; all in that quarter must be God's doing. His own department was to gain from the state what belonged to the state, and to prepare those subordinate means, without which, Providence does not interpose, but which yet diminish not from the divine nature of the interposition.

"My beloved sons, said Amator, to a large concourse of his own flock, whom he had assembled in the hall of his house on his return to Auxerre, listen to me with attention; what I have to communicate to you is of the utmost importance. By revelation from God I have learnt that the day of my departure from this world is at hand. I therefore exhort you all with one

<sup>1</sup> These epithets were not merely redundancies, as there was much nicety of etiquette concerning the titles of the different *officers of State*. See Gibbon, tom. iv.

mind, carefully to inquire after the fittest person to elect overseer of God's house." The multitude remained silent, no one could speak for amazement. The election of Bishops rested at that time very generally in the hands of the people ;<sup>1</sup> the whole burden indeed usually devolved on the clergy, from the uncertainties of popular suffrage ; still the privilege of electing belonged to the former, and they were as zealous in asserting it, as they were inefficient in exercising it. Amator, perceiving the silence of the people, proceeded forthwith to the Church. The multitude followed him. At the entrance he stopped, and bid them lay down their weapons and staves, adding, that they were about to enter the house of prayer, not the camp of the god of war. This was apparently directed to German and his party, whose rage had had time to abate, and who urged by the same feelings as the rest, had come to see the end of this astonishing scene. Accordingly they laid aside their arms, and entered the Church with the crowd. Amator having watched the opportunity when German entered, immediately gave orders to the Porters,<sup>2</sup> that is, the lowest members of the ecclesiastical order, to shut the doors of the Church, and fasten them closely. He then gathered the clergy round himself, with those nobles who were present, and proceeding

<sup>1</sup> Guizot France, Leçon iii.—See also Eusebius, Lib. vi. ch. 13. and Valesius, Note at the words, " ὑπο παντός τοῦ κληροῦ καὶ αἵων διακολούμενος."

<sup>2</sup> In Latin Ostiarii. This was the last grade of the Clergy, see Ducange ad vocem. Isidorus junior explains his functions in this manner. " To the porter belong the keys of the Church, in order that he may shut and open the temple of God, have the custody of every thing within and without, admit the faithful, and exclude the *infidel* and *excommunicated*."

straightway to German, laid hold of him. Then he solemnly invoked the name of God, cut off his hair, stripped him of his secular robes, and clothed him in the habit of an ecclesiastic.<sup>1</sup> After this he ordained him Priest, and addressed him thus: "Labour you must, most beloved and revered brother, to preserve immaculate and entire the dignity which has been committed to you; know, that at my death God has willed you should succeed to my office."

Scarcely had Amator retired from the Church, than he began to feel the symptoms of his final sickness. His zeal however continued the same. Though debilitated by fever, he ceased not to preach to his people, and perform the last duties of his office. One topic was ever foremost in his discourse: the succession of German to the Bishopric on his death, which was fast approaching. Unanimity in electing him he strongly pressed upon them; nor were the inclinations of the multitude less desirous of the succession, as they showed by answering with one accord, "Amen." At the same time tears rushed from their eyes, and grief filled their hearts, at the prospect of the loss they were to sustain. This, Amator endeavoured to alleviate by the character he drew of his successor, as revealed to him by God. On Wednesday the 1st of May, 418, A. D. he began to experience the agonies of death. In the

<sup>1</sup> It seems to be agreed, that the Tonsure was not quite the same with that in the present Roman Church. A circle of hair was left, say some, to grow round the lower part of the head. St. Martin, by his opponents, was called "*Hominem vultu despicabilem, veste sordidum, crine deformem.*" Sulp. Sex. ch. vii. His editor refers to Concil. Tolet. iv. c. 40. and Isid. de Offi. iv. 4. Bingham lays needless stress upon what small distinction *existed in different times.*

midst of these he still continued to address words of consolation to all around, and to mitigate the general sorrow. "Surely, said he, these expressions of grief are ill-suited to your condition ; you are about to obtain a Bishop far better than me. What poor services I may have been able to bestow, he will greatly surpass, by contributing to your eternal advantage. I mean, not only in life, but even in death he will remain the blessing of your city." These words were understood by the inhabitants of Auxerre in later times, to be prophetic of the numerous miracles which were performed at the tomb of St. German. Then Amator requested he might be carried to the Church, intending to give up his spirit in the place where he had so often by day and by night, confessed the name of God. A great multitude accompanied him ; the clergy advanced first, and then followed the matrons. He had just time to be taken up to his pontifical throne, (which, probably, like in many Churches of the time, was placed at the extreme end of what we should now call the Chancel,)<sup>1</sup> before he breathed his last, at the third hour of the day, that is, about nine in the morning, according to our present reckoning, the hour appointed for the chief office of the Church, and that in which our blessed Lord is supposed to have been crucified. At the same time, says Constantius, our chief informer, a choir of Saints, to the wonder of all, was seen to descend, and amid hymns and praises, to carry up his spirit in the form of a dove to heaven. Many he adds, who had been present and lived in his own time, were ready to bear witness to the fact. Among these, says another writer before quoted, was Helena, a holy virgin famous for her virtues and mira-

<sup>1</sup> See Bingham's plan after Eusebius's Description.



cles, whose feast occurs on the 22nd of May.<sup>1</sup> His body after it had been washed, was conveyed to the same cemetery where Martha had been buried, and which was called, as we have seen, Mons Autricus or Mont-Artre. A circumstance which occurred some time after, contributed to render this spot still more famous, though it was already noted for the blessed remains it contained. But of this hereafter.

When the multitude who had accompanied the funeral procession were returning, they were met by a paralytic person borne on the shoulders of others. He had come from the province of Berri, which is at some distance from Auxerre, attracted by the fame of Amator's holiness, and with some hope of being healed by him. His infirmity had remained with him for thirty years. He appears to have been a man in affluence. His attendants, ignorant of the Bishop's death, inquired of the multitude concerning him, and learnt the nature of the procession they had seen. Thereupon the infirm man entreated that he might be allowed the use of the water, in which his body had been washed. German who had not yet resigned his office of Governor, though he had been ordained Priest,<sup>2</sup> struck with their faith, gave orders that the limbs of the paralytic man should be washed with the water. The command had scarcely been executed, when the sufferer recovered his strength and soundness.

It is also said, but the authority is less certain, that as the funeral procession was passing by the public gaol, the gates opened by miracle, the prisoners regained their liberty and joined in the train.

<sup>1</sup> Stephanus Africanus. 22nd May. Boll.

<sup>2</sup> "*Tunc Presbyter;*" subsequently he is called Magistrate.

Bede,<sup>1</sup> in his Martyrology, assigns the 6th of November, as the day of Amator's Deposition. Those of Usuard and the Latin writers, says Tillemont,<sup>2</sup> place his feast on the 1st of May, the day on which his body was solemnly translated, (and also apparently the day of his decease.)

In 870, says Hericus,<sup>3</sup> who lived at that time, his remains were carried about, and the monks of St. German's monastery went in procession to request a relic of him. They obtained the fingers of the right hand, with which he had cut off German's hair, and carried them back to their own monastery, and deposited them in German's tomb. This meeting of the remains of two saints, so strangely connected with each other in life, was signalized by the miraculous cure of an infirm woman.

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## CHAPTER V.

### *German Bishop.*

AFTER the death of Amator, there was but one voice in favour of the election of German in his place. The three distinct orders, the Clergy, Nobility, and People, including those who resided in the neighbourhood, as well as the inhabitants of Auxerre, joined in demanding the performance of the Divine order so lately communicated through Amator. But German could not bring himself to accept an office, for which he deemed he had had so little preparation. By his former charge

<sup>1</sup> He says Augustoduno, but this is probably a mistake for Antissioduro.

<sup>2</sup> Tillemont, t. xv. p. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Vide Supra.

in the administration of the state, he had been thrown into circumstances so very unfavourable to the exercise of religious duties, that he needs must unlearn much that he knew, over and above the acquirement of what was indispensable for the episcopal functions. When the empire was in the gift of armies or factions, and tyrants were continually changing, involving often an entire revolution in the government of the provinces; when court intrigues, and all the pernicious arts of designing men, occupied the chief attention of the officers of the republic, that conscientiousness and singleness of heart which German felt were necessary in an ecclesiastical ruler, were exposed to dangers almost unavoidable. He therefore determined to refuse the election which he foresaw, and brought with him a party to support him. But all was in vain. He failed in commanding the wonted submission of the people; and a regular opposition was raised against him, not only by the mass of the people,<sup>1</sup> but by the nobles also, and even the former abettors of his own cause. Forced at last to accept the Bishopric, he soon showed that he was more fit for the office than he had supposed, and that the direction of Providence was signally manifested in the circumstances of the event.

Vocations are not to be lightly esteemed, because there may appear an insufficiency in the means to fulfil them. Humanly speaking, nothing could be more unfit for the conversion of nations, than the instrumentality of the fishermen of Galilee. But they were ordered to take no thought about what they should say, that is, not to shrink from their task, from ignorance of the means of discharging it; "For the Holy Ghost, it is added, shall teach you all things." "It is impossible,

<sup>1</sup> *Bellum civile indicitur potestati.* Const.

says Tillemont,<sup>1</sup> to conceive any thing more astonishing than this vocation of St. German, so contrary, as it should seem, to the rules of the Church. But when He who is the Master of all rules speaks, it is our part to worship Him, and receive His orders with humble submission. It may be said that St. Britius, who at that time governed the Church of Tours, was still more unfit for the Bishopric than St. German, and yet God called him by the mouth of the very St. Martin, whom he had offended when Deacon and Priest, much more grievously than St. German had St. Amator. God purified St. Britius, by dreadful persecutions, and St. German, by austerities unheard of in Gaul, and which the power of grace alone can enable to undergo. These, he concludes, are fully established by the sincerity of Constantius his Biographer."

German's accession to the Bishopric of Auxerre, may be assigned with tolerable certainty, to the 7th of July 418, A. D. He was apparently elected, as distinguished from consecrated, immediately after St. Amator's death, as we have just seen, and therefore on the 1st of May. About a month before, Amator had first secured him to the ministry of the Church and ordained him Priest, according to all probability, *per saltum*, that is, without the preparatory degrees.<sup>2</sup> But the delays occasioned by his own diffidence, and the necessity of getting three Bishops to attend at his consecration protracted the ceremony of his induction to the month of July.

The reader may be desirous to know what were the leading circumstances of the fortunes of the Roman

<sup>1</sup> Mémoires Eccl. t. xv.

<sup>2</sup> See Bingh. 2 B. ii. ch. sec. 4, also Euseb. B. vi. 43.

Empire when this event took place. Honorius was still Emperor of the West. He had again recovered the possession of Gaul through his able General, Constantius. That country had been distressed by civil war for many years. Maximus,<sup>1</sup> in 388, had given the example of laying hold of the imperial crown without any other title than ambition. The murder of Gratian, the lawful Emperor, by which he had secured his usurpation, was punished however subsequently by Theodosius the Great, who conquered him at Aquileia and put him to death. After him Eugenius, the creature of Arbozart, who durst not proclaim himself Emperor because he was not a Roman citizen, assumed the purple in Gaul, and was likewise vanquished and beheaded by Theodosius about 394. In the third place shortly before the time which we are considering, Constantine, a common soldier, who had been saluted Emperor in Britain, had passed over into Gaul, taken possession of it, removed the imperial residence from Treves to Arles, and had engaged successfully with the barbarians, was at last subdued by the General of Honorius and murdered on his road to Rome. Other tyrants<sup>2</sup> succeeded him for a very short time in Gaul, but Constantius soon put them down, and restored the greater part of that country to Honorius, the son of Theodosius. Some provinces in the West were conceded to the Gothic king Wallia

During these changes Rome had been taken and sacked

<sup>1</sup> See Anquetil, tom. i. and *Annales Alfordii ad annos ejusdem sæculi*. Gibbon, tom. iv.

<sup>2</sup> Their character is described briefly by Sidonius in these words, "In Constantino inconstantiam, in Jovino facilitatem, in Gerontio perfidiam, singula in singulis, omnia in Dardano crimina simul exsecrabantur." Ep. ix. B. v. p. 32.

by Alaric, the king of the Goths. This year, 418, Zozimus, the Pope, died, and was succeeded by Bonifacius. Zozimus himself had succeeded to Innocent, a pontiff remarkable for his opposition to the growing heresy of Pelagius. Two councils had been held in Innocent's time, about 416, against Pelagianism, one at Carthage, another at Milevum in Numidia, where St. Augustine of Hippo presided. Innocent had ratified the decrees of these councils, which had formally condemned the authors of the heresy. These circumstances are considered by the defenders of the Papal prerogative as decisive in favour of the claims of the Apostolic See ; they occurred only two years before German's elevation. The next year Pelagius had made a public abjuration of his errors in a letter to Innocent, the contents of which are the best explanation of the dangers with which his doctrines threatened the Church.<sup>1</sup> Zozimus, the next Pope, had been imposed upon by Celestius, the companion of Pelagius, a circumstance which some divines have exaggerated into an imputation of indulgence towards heresy, while Alford, a divine of another school, maintains, with some reason, that Zozimus proscribed the Pelagian heresy at the very same time. His successor Bonifacius, the same year 418, engaged Honorius to write a public letter to the Pretorian Prefect, to extirpate Pelagianism and banish the supporters of it for ever. The sentence was to extend over all the empire. To add one more prominent fact to this brief sketch, we may observe that St. Jerome was still alive, as well as St. Augustine. St. Chrysostom had died a few years before in banishment. The writings of these three fathers, perhaps the most cele-

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Apud Alford. Ad An. 417.

brated in history, were doubtless the study of the new Bishop, next to the Holy Scriptures, which he appears to have searched forthwith with the greatest diligence.

We have seen that when St. Amator ordained German in the Church before all the people, he invested him with the religious habit, as his Biographer calls it, that is, the monastic dress. From this circumstance some have thought that he became an actual monk.<sup>1</sup> But this seems to be a mistake. There was no monastery then at Auxerre : St. German was the first to institute one at a future period.<sup>2</sup> Nor did he ever become monk himself, though he continued to wear the dress of that profession during the thirty years of his Episcopate. This was no uncommon practice. St. Martin, Bishop of Tours, had always worn the monastic habit. But the office of Bishop was kept distinct from the character of monk.<sup>3</sup> By the outward appearance, a stranger might not discover whether a man was an ecclesiastic, a monk, or a penitent, as is shown by a question put by Sidonius Apollinaris to a friend. But at this time the governors of the Church were zealous in keeping the clerical body distinct from the cœnobitic, the more so, as there was a growing tendency in the Western Church to fill the ecclesiastical ranks with men taken from monasteries at the expense frequently of adequate preparation, and of the order which distinguished the degrees. Hence in some sharp letters of Zozimus and Celestine, the monks are emphatically denominated by the term of laymen, which

<sup>1</sup> Among these, Alford, in his *Annals*.

<sup>2</sup> These points are satisfactorily explained in Boschius' *Comment. Præv. ch. v. apud Bolland, 31 Jul.*

<sup>3</sup> *Lib. iv. Ep. xxiv. p. 404.*

indeed was fully applicable to them before St. Benedict's time.

The circumstances of German's elevation to the Bishopric of Auxerre are so striking, and, together with other instances somewhat similar, have given occasion to such discordant opinions, that it may not be out of place to compare one or two parallel accounts left to us by contemporary writers. It is unquestionably false to say with a modern writer, "that the election of Bishops had not the characteristics of a real institution, that it was destitute of rules, of permanent and legal forms, and abandoned to the chance of circumstances and passions."<sup>1</sup> It is perhaps nearer to the truth to say, that there existed a real standard of order, and a received body of apostolical canons, but that they were not as yet considered invariably obligatory, and were in some particulars often dispensed with in emergencies.<sup>2</sup> The history of St. Ambrose is well known. After the death of Auxentius, the Arian Bishop of Milan, the people, the Clergy, and the Bishops of the Province, had met in the cathedral to elect a successor. The confusion was very great, and the divisions of the Orthodox and the Arians impeded the decision. A violent tumult ensued, when Ambrose, the civil governor of Milan, arrived. He was not much above thirty years old. Having learnt the cause of the disturbance, he entered the cathedral, and addressed the people in order to pacify them. His appearance and manner pleased the multitude, and it is reported that a child screamed out in the Church, "Ambrose is Bishop."

<sup>1</sup> Guizot France, tom. i. Leçon 3.

<sup>2</sup> See Hallier. De Sacris electionibus et ordinationibus. P. ii. S. l. Ch. i.



The meeting was not dissolved before Ambrose was proclaimed Bishop with one consent.<sup>1</sup> What renders this election still more extraordinary than that of German is, that Ambrose was not yet a Christian, but only a Catechumen. He was then baptized, and eight days after consecrated.

Ambrose's election took place about fifty years before that of German. Sidonius Apollinaris relates a similar example which occurred about fifty years after. The Bishop of Bourges, in France, was dead, and the ardour of competitors and factions was so great, that the whole town was thrown into confusion.<sup>2</sup> Thereupon Sidonius, lately made Bishop himself of Clermont in Auvergne, and distinguished for his birth, wealth, eloquence and science, was requested by the inhabitants of Bourges to repair to their city to make choice of a successor for them. Sidonius took with him some other Bishops, and proceeded to Bourges. Having assembled the people and clergy, he pronounced a discourse to them in which he reviewed those classes of persons against whom objections might be raised. "A monk, he said, will be considered unequal to fulfil the double part of intercessor with God and civil magistrate ; and there are not wanting many among the people and clergy who entertain invidious prejudices against the whole order. Again, if I choose from the clergy, immediately jealousy and contempt will be excited. Should I decide for one invested with military offices and honours, what accusations of partiality to a profession through which I have myself passed !" He

<sup>1</sup> See Church of the Fathers. Hallier, P. ii. S. i. Ch. i. St. Paulin. Vita Ambrosii.

<sup>2</sup> Sid. Ap. B. vii. Lett. ix.

then proceeded to give the description of the person he thought fit to succeed to the Bishopric. He was a layman, he was even a soldier, he was married and had offspring ; but then he was a zealous friend of the Church, the defender of her rights, and he had built a temple to God at his own expense ; he was moreover of noble birth, in affluence, kind, charitable, mature in age and mind, and especially too modest to desire the sacred dignity, a circumstance which made him the more deserving. Such was Simplicius, who forthwith was consecrated Bishop of Bourges and Metropolitan of the Province.<sup>1</sup>

Many other instances similar to these might be quoted, to show that German's election was not a solitary example. But after all, they were mere exceptions and irregularities, and indicative of that spirit of toleration and expansion with which the Church suffered deviations from her canons in cases of necessity. As well might it be said that there is no established form for Baptism, because in extreme emergencies the ministry of a layman is allowed to supply that of a clergyman, as that these exceptions prove the want of canonical rules in the ordinations of ecclesiastics. Different churches might have different customs on minor points, but in all essentials the consent was uniform in Christendom. It was embodied in what Pope Celestine calls the Decrees of the Fathers (*Decreta Patrum*,) and was appealed to as *the Ecclesiastical Custom*.<sup>2</sup>

Modern philosophy does not appear to have exercised all its ingenuity as yet upon the period which we are considering, otherwise we might expect some clever

<sup>1</sup> See other parallel cases in Guizot's France. Leçon 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ep. ii. § 3. apud Labb. Concil. tom. iii. p. 482.

theory to prove that a transition like that of German from a high civil magistracy to a clerical office, was the effect, not of divine intervention, or of any desire to promote the welfare of the Church, but of mere fear and the pressure of worldly circumstances. Constantine the tyrant would be cited to show that the easiest way to escape the vengeance of enemies was to assume the clerical coat.<sup>1</sup> The words of Sidonius, who in the perils of civil war observed that the nobility had resolved to seek their safety in the ecclesiastical state or in banishment, would be appealed to with confidence. And among those whom in fact fear and policy had driven into the clergy, the illustrious saints whose examples edified the whole Church, would be indiscriminately ranked. Attempts of this kind have been made to rob the City of God in patriarchal times of her blessed succession of witnesses. Nor would it be more extraordinary if the transition of German were attributed to the growing ascendancy of the barbarians, the changeableness of Court intrigues, or the worldly advantage to be derived from a station which engaged the esteem of the people while the civil authorities daily lost their influence. However the subsequent life of German is a sufficient answer to such intimations, were they made, as we shall see in the following chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Vid. *Annals Alford*, ad Annum, 410-11.

## CHAPTER VI.

*German's character and mode of Life.*

is difficult to conceive any thing more surprising sudden than the change which took place in German. St. Paul, whose conversion is the type of wonderful changes, yet was earnest, ascetic, strict from the first.<sup>1</sup> He had always lived according to the strictest sect of his religion a Pharisee. But German had been surrounded with the luxury and comforts of the world, courted by all, accustomed to command not to serve, and lulled in the arms of domestic happiness. Like Jonah he might have "made himself a booth and sat under it in the shadow to see what would become of the city" of God. Instead of this, he at once girded his loins and prepared to take an active part in the spiritual warfare of the Church. Let us attend to the account given by Constantius, his biographer. He immediately resigned his civil appointment, dismissed his numerous attendants, sacrificed the splendid and pleasurable possessions of his wealth, gave away his substance to the poor, and enlisted himself in their company. His wife Eustachia became his sister. It is uncertain whether she continued to dwell under the same roof, or retired to a religious house. The circumstances of his future life seem to imply the latter, for he travelled much, and her presence on those occasions is not no-

<sup>1</sup> προς ὑποταγῶσιν τῶν μελλόντων πιστεῦναι. 1 Tim. i. 18.

ticed, nay, must have been noticed in some, had she kept him company. However there was nothing to share with him. His table was seldom spread for himself, his days were employed in the duties of his office, his nights were spent in prayer and meditation.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to his austerities, much of course was concealed from the public gaze, as is remarked of our own George Herbert ; but though he ever strove to avoid observation, yet as a city built on a hill cannot remain hid, so the brightness of his sanctity shone through all reserve, and spread a glow over his least actions. What was ascertained may be briefly summed up as follows : From the day on which he began his ministry to the end of his life, that is, for the space of thirty years, he was so spare in his diet, that he never eat wheaten bread, never touched wine, vinegar, oil or vegetables, nor ever made use of salt to season his food. On the nativity and resurrection of our Lord alone he allowed himself one draught of wine diluted with water, so as to preserve little of its flavour. Meat was out of the question ; he lived more rigorously than any monk, and in those early times no meat was allowed to monks in France, except in the most urgent cases of debility and sickness.<sup>2</sup> What he did take was mere barley bread which he had winnowed and ground himself. First however he took some ashes, and, by way of humiliation, tasted them. Severe as was this diet, it appears almost miraculous when we are told that he never eat at all but twice a week, on Wednesdays and Satur-

<sup>1</sup> " Vitabat suorum Solatia." Const. again " Convivium jejunos pastor exhibuit."

<sup>2</sup> See Calmet, Règle de St. Benoît. tom. i. 564.

days, and in the evening of those days ; nay that generally he abstained entirely till the seventh day.<sup>1</sup>

His clothing was the same in winter and in summer, simply the *cuculla* and the tunic. What these were in the fifth century we learn from Cassian, a contemporary writer.<sup>2</sup> The *cuculla*, he says, was a small hood for the head, ending in point and falling down over the neck as far as the shoulders. In process of time this dress changed very considerably. The *tunic* was a mere shirt, which the ancients wore next to the skin and generally without sleeves. Cassian describes the monks with linen tunics, which he calls *colobia*, the sleeves of which descended only to the elbow. But he is describing the monastic habit of the Egyptians, and it is probable that when the same pattern was adopted from them in Gaul, the tunic was made of wool or coarse stuff. It covered the whole body and reached to the feet. Under this however German wore the badge of the religious profession, the hair-cloth, (*cilicium*) which never left him. He seldom bought a new dress, but

<sup>1</sup> That this is the true sense of the passage is proved by another of the same author Constantius. B. ii. ch. 66. “Cujus in ediam septimus plerumque dies pane tantum hordeaceo recreabat.” See Bosch. Boll. ad locum Const.

<sup>2</sup> “Cucullis perparvis usque ad cervicis humerorumque demissis confinia, quibus tantum capita contegant, indesinenter utuntur diebus ac noctibus.” Quoted by Camlet, Règle de St. Benoît, ch. lv. tom. ii.

“Colobiis lineis induti quæ vix ad cubitorum ima pertingunt, nudas de reliquo circumferunt manus.” Ibid.

Cassian travelled into Egypt, and founded afterwards a monastic house at Marseilles, after the model of Egypt. On the subject of the Egyptian monks, see the abstract of Fleury, tom. v, Liv. 20. p. 20, &c. See also Liv. 24. p. 600, &c. See also Heliot, tom. i. p. 163.

wore the old till it was nearly in rags, unless perchance he parted with it for some person in distress whom he had no other means of relieving.

His bed was even more uninviting than his dress. Four planks, in the form of an oblong, contained a bed of ashes, which they prevented from being dispersed. By the continual pressure of the body they had become hard, and presented a surface as rough as stone. On this he lay with his hair-cloth alone, and another coarse cloth for a coverlet.<sup>1</sup> No pillow supported his head, his whole body lay flat on the painful couch. He did not take off his garment to sleep, and seldom even loosened the girdle or took off his shoes. Neither did he ever part with a leathern belt which fastened to his chest a little box containing the relics of the saints. This, his only treasure, he valued above all earthly things. The relics were those of all the Apostles and of different Martyrs. At a subsequent period he took some from them to deposit in the tomb of St. Alban, at Verulam, in Britain; and it was this little box which the Empress Placidia so eagerly desired when German died at Ravenna. His sleep was such as might be expected from these austerities; it was neither long, nor unin-

<sup>1</sup> "Sagulum." See Calmet, tom. ii. p. 268. Also Bosch. Boll. Not. ad § 75. "Sagulum ego indumentum hic intelligi nullum existimo sed lodicem sen stragulum quâ noctu obtectus dormiebat."

As there appears a slight inconsistency as the text of Constantius stands, viz.: "Stratum omne, *subjecto cilicio*, et superposito uno tantum sagulo, fuit.—Noctibus nunquam vestitum, raro cingulum, raro calceamenta detraxit;" we might almost suspect *cilicio* had been written for *silice*, alluding to the hard ashes. Lipoman, Surius, the Bollandists have however all *cilicio*.

terraptured. Frequently after the example of our Lord he would pass the whole night in prayer ; and it should seem that these holy vigils had a peculiar efficacy in his case, which manifested itself in the following mornings by miracles and extraordinary deeds. These midnight watchings were divided between the tears and groans of penitence and hymns of praise and intercessions. In this manner, says his biographer, as we have before remarked, did the blessed German expiate any past errors into which human infirmity may have led him, and set the example of a sudden and transcendent holiness.

According to the Apostolic precept he was “given to hospitality.” His house was open to every one and he paid no regard to the quality of the visitor. Faithful to the lesson taught by our Lord Himself, he washed the feet of his guests with his own hands and then prepared a feast which all partook of but the ascetic German. It is often said at the present day that there is cowardice and want of faith in retiring from the world to avoid temptation, and that to bury religion in monastic seclusion is to perform but one part of the Christian Law which commands us to love our neighbours as ourselves. Here then German might obtain the approbation of modern objectors. He did not leave the world as far as outward things are concerned. His whole Episcopate was passed amid the tumult and concourse of men, with the exception of those hours he spent among the Brotherhood he instituted, as we shall see. He would fail however in satisfying them, in that he encouraged monastic retirement in others. Nor was it by contenting himself with smaller measures of strictness than a religious rule enforced, that he preserved his conscience spotless in the busy scenes of the world.



He lived like St. Anthony and St. Athanasius at the same time.

No distinct account has been left us of the personal appearance of German. All we know is that when his body was removed in the ninth century it was observed that he was of middle stature, and that he had a fine head of hair interspersed with white hairs.<sup>1</sup> In this form we are told he also appeared to a little girl whom he cured of dumbness after his death. As a general remark it may be said that his features were rendered squalid and emaciated by the severe fasts he endured,<sup>2</sup> while at the same time his countenance possessed a dignity which commanded universal respect.<sup>3</sup> Dugdale informs us that in St. German's Priory in Cornwall there was a mutilated impression from the Seal of this monastery. The inscription was gone, but the area on one side represented a few faint traces of the figure of the Saint.

If it may be permitted to assign human reasons, where so much was superhuman, we should say German was naturally a healthy person and possessed a robust constitution. Other Saints, by austerities less great than his, were rendered infirm for life. St. Bernard never quite recovered from the effects of his early severities.<sup>4</sup> Forced to be carried about in a carriage, he was subject to temporary weaknesses which greatly impeded his exertions. St. Basil<sup>5</sup> again and St. Chrysostom lost the health of their body while the soul seemed to gather

<sup>1</sup> Hericus de Miraculis, C. v. B. i.

<sup>2</sup> Constantius, C. ii. B. ix. apud Surium.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Ch. xxxiii.

<sup>4</sup> Neander's Life of St. Bernard.

<sup>5</sup> Church of the Fathers, p. 114 and 71.

fresh vigour for heavenly things.<sup>1</sup> "I cannot number, says the former, the various affections which have befallen me, my weakness, the violence of the fever and the bad state of my constitution." German was not apparently subject to this trial. The only sickness we find he endured previous to his last illness was a temporary lameness, produced by a fall, when he sojourned in Britain. Like St. Martin of Tours, he could undertake long expeditions, and mix in the stir and noise of the crowd without inconvenience. All blessings are from God. Daniel was "fairer and fatter in flesh" than all the children which did eat the portion of the king's meat, though he lived on pulse.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps German had not those particular inclinations and habits which needed the humiliation of bodily suffering. The pride of learning, intellect and wisdom, seem to have been checked often by these visitations. St. Paul had a thorn in the flesh, lest he should be too much exalted. St. Basil thought he owed much to some such affliction, in being weaned from the seductive philosophy of Athens.<sup>3</sup> German was probably free from these allurements. He became profoundly learned in sacred science, insomuch, that St. Patrick, the apostle of Ireland, esteemed him the best guide for his own early studies, of all the teachers of Gaul. Yet he was ignorant of that passionate love for learning as such which seems to have devoured the minds of Origen and others.

It is to be regretted, together with the absence of any external description, that we have no definite account of his particular natural disposition, or of his acquirements. It is certainly interesting, if it is not instruc-

<sup>1</sup> Fleury, Lib. 21, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel i. 15.

<sup>3</sup> Serm. "De Libris Gentilium Legendis."

tive, to learn what characteristics of a more earthly kind were combined with the heavenly virtues of Saints. And the observation is often made, that their example has more hold upon the imagination of the weaker brethren than that of our blessed Lord, for the reason, that they were liable to infirmity, and had tastes and feelings which showed them to be mere men. The want of such description, is perhaps to be attributed to the fact, that his biographer was not personally acquainted with him. He had certain means indeed of obtaining minute information, whether from the monks of Auxerre, who had continual opportunity of seeing him and conversing with him, or from those Bishops and men of education who attended him in his last days almost without intermission. But his account is a mere sketch ; and what seems important to one writer does not to another ; nay, different subjects of consideration occupy different generations ; at one time miracles, at another original characters. Then again, the style of Constantius is poetical, not philosophical, and style is indicative of the train of men's thoughts.

However, thus much appears. From the time of his ordination, he applied diligently to the study of the scriptures, and became so versed in theological matters, that he was considered among the Doctors of the time. St. Patrick spent many years under his tuition.<sup>1</sup> The learned suppose him to have committed to writing some of the fruits of his studies. But nothing has remained. His natural eloquence, his learning and practical wisdom, would mark him out as the fittest person to encounter the Pelagians in Britain, even in a synod of

<sup>1</sup> This is well authenticated from Probus, Jocelin, Hericus and others. See Stillingfleet Orig. p. 211. Ed. 8vo.

prelates, where so many were eminent for talent as well as piety. The event proved the justness of their choice. "His own arguments, we are told, were interspersed with revealed truth, and while he poured forth in torrents of eloquence the dictates of his conscience, he supported them always with the agreement of what he had read."<sup>1</sup> That there was in his language an elevation and wisdom, which are not indeed to be taken apart from his holy life, but which were the especial cause of the attention paid to his words, is manifest from the unwearied earnestness with which his last discourses were received by the six Bishops who waited upon him, among whom was the famous St. Peter, surnamed Chrysologus, one of the Doctors of the Church, and then Bishop of Ravenna.<sup>2</sup> The moral endowments which he evinced before his conversion distinguished him throughout. He retained all his firmness of purpose, courage in difficulties, command over his own will and that of others, presence of mind, penetration and prudence. But Christianity taught him resignation in suffering, charity which flowed over the least of his actions, forgetfulness of self in common danger, a spirit of reserve strongly contrasted with his former tendency to ostentation.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Const. ch. xxiii. Surius. B. i.

<sup>2</sup> Conf. also, ch. xxxiii. "Assidebant jugiter obsequentes sex venerabiles sacerdotes." "Dum cum Episcopis sermones conferret de religione."

<sup>3</sup> "Sed semper secreti obumbratione notitiam suppressit." Ch. xvi. Surius.

## CHAPTER VII.

*St. German founds a Monastery.*

ONE of the first acts which displayed German's zeal for the Church over which he was appointed, was also highly characteristic of the age in which he lived. The fifth century was the period which introduced the monastic system in Gaul and other Western countries. The East had got the start of a hundred years. German was the first to institute it at Auxerre. No positive declaration of the causes which led him to found a monastery has been transmitted, except that which was obvious enough to a Saint of those times, "the advancement of religion."<sup>1</sup> But it requires very little stretch of imagination to understand the chain of circumstances which gave the impulse. First, however, let us ascertain the fact itself.

At the north-east of Auxerre, separated by the river Yonne from the town itself, as it then was, he built the first monastery which had been seen in that district. It was dedicated to St. Cosmas and St. Damianus, Martyrs, and subsequently obtained the name of St. Germans. Afterwards it again changed its appellation and was called St. Marian, from one of the holy brethren who gave lustre to the institution. This is not the monastery which was celebrated as the Abbey St. Germans of Auxerre at a later period, the fame of which far eclipsed St. Marian. St. Marian, however, was the original foundation, and under its vaults the body of

<sup>1</sup> Ad profectum religionis. Const.

German himself reposed, until it was translated to the larger convent in the ninth century. It is now no longer standing, one column alone exists to testify the spot of its situation. But before it fell into ruin one might have seen the very cell of the good Bishop, where he retired when he visited the monastery. It could be entered only by a small opening, and in a kneeling posture. This place was the witness of his many prayers and mortifications. St. Alodius, probably the same who succeeded him in the Bishopric, was the first Abbot or Archimandrite, as he was called ; and after him St. Mamertinus was elected, the conversion of whom holds a prominent rank in the history of our Saint. These are the only Abbots known before the twelfth century ; when the order of the Premonstrants was established at St. Marian. After various changes, the monastery was finally destroyed by the Calvinists, in 1567, among the other acts of their sacrilegious fury.

We must now return to those causes which doubtless influenced German's mind, and which will furnish the most satisfactory explanation to be obtained concerning the rule and discipline of the new monastery.

There were at this time three principal religious houses in France, that of Marmontier, near Tours, instituted by St. Martin, that of St. Victor, at Marseilles, founded by Cassian, and that of Lerins, an island to the south of France, where St. Honoratus retired. Which of these was the model of that at Auxerre ? Not Marmontier, because it had scarcely any rule at all in its origin. Lerins, on the other hand, in process of time adopted the constitutions of Cassian as well as St. Victor. The rule of Cassian which he established at Marseilles was that which attracted the chief notice, and we shall

see that there were many associations which would particularly recommend it to German. But we must take up the subject somewhat higher.

Enmity to institutions as well as to men and persuasions is an active principle which exercises the human ingenuity in the discovery of everything which tells against the devoted object. But love is one of far greater energy, as it never faileth, "and endureth all things ;"<sup>1</sup> it is ever ardent and indefatigable in the support of the cause it has espoused. Much, then, has been written to weaken the foundations of monasticism, but much more has been written for the establishment of its claims. Indeed, if any plausible work has been composed to throw discredit upon it, the labours of love have furnished apparently the chief materials ; and as heretics learn even the history of heresy from the Church, the enemies of the cœnobitic life have gained their information from its very advocates. This persuasion may afford sufficient ground for the view here taken of its origin.<sup>2</sup>

Four modifications of the monastic system are observable in the early ages. The ascetics, properly so called, are its first representatives. They existed in the times of the Apostles ; nay, they were always in the Church, under the Judaic dispensation, before the Christian. Celibacy, fasting, prayer, silence, watching, and mortification, were the practice of their profession. It does not appear that in the earliest times of Christianity they separated from the general community. The Church itself, when compared with the rest of the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinth. 13.

<sup>2</sup> See Fleury. Discours. Hist. Eccl. Héliot Discours. préliminaire.

orld, was a monastery. And while the fervour of the whole body countenanced strictness and austerity, separation was superseded. When the numbers of Christians increased, and all ranks, professions, and pursuits acknowledged the standard of the cross, the temptations of the world entered into the Church's bosom. This was the signal for the first general retreat. The hermits, or anchorites, forthwith fixed their abode in the deserts. Nor did their behaviour meet with any disapprobation. They were called the people of God in a special sense, their example was professed from the pulpit to the multitude, and their prayers were allowed to have a peculiar efficacy for the rest of the world.

Such were the two first stages of the monastic spirit. When the hermits had filled the deserts, they began to draw near to each other, and to fix their habitations or cells in close vicinity to each other. These religious societies abounded in Egypt during the fourth century. They resembled little cities, where each man had his own house, and all met, morning and evening, to pray together. St. Martin's monastery, at Tours, was at first nothing else than a community of this kind. Finally, in the midst of these, arose in Egypt the fourth class of monks, those which were destined to revail—the Cœnobites. They cast all their substance into one common stock, assembled under one roof, conformed to one rule, and submitted to one superior. The Abbot, or Archimandrite, thus obtained a distinct position. After this model have all future monastic institutions been framed, though there were in the fourth and fifth centuries some characteristics which do not exist at present.<sup>1</sup> There seems to be reason in the

<sup>1</sup> Guizot. France.



remark of a modern historian, that a principle of liberty was the basis of monasteries at their origin. No obligation of perpetual residence, other than that of decency, obtained. A set of devout persons congregated to practise a rule of life impracticable in the world ; but they were not, at least in the west, bound by vows before the sixth century, when St. Benedict founded his order. There were even instances when those who had attained a high degree of perfection retired from their monastery to live the life of hermits. Another prominent feature of the institution was, that monks were regarded as laymen, and had actually few among them who were ordained. Like other classes of men distinct from the clergy, they were subject to the same kind of episcopal jurisdiction ; nor had they for a long time any appointed priests for themselves, but were members of the diocese and parish in which they lived, and attended one common church with the rest of the people. Many reasons, however, would have, and in fact, did supervene, to require peculiar ministers for themselves, without recurring to the invidious motive of vieing with the secular clergy, which is assigned by some. Still it is manifest that till the tenth century the monastic houses were never emancipated from the episcopal rule. In 451, a few years after the foundation of German's monastery, the following canon was enacted by the council of Chalcedon. "Let those who have sincerely and in truth adopted the solitary life, be honoured as is just. But whereas some, who are in appearance and name monks, throw confusion into the civil and ecclesiastical affairs, by wandering into towns, and attempting to establish of their own accord monasteries, it is decreed that no one *shall build or found a monastery or a chapel, without*

the sanction of the Bishop of the city. Let the monks in every city and country be subject to the Bishops, let them quietly, apply themselves to fasting and prayer, and remain on the spot where they have made renunciation of the world. Careless of external things, let them continue in their seclusion, unless the contrary be ordered by the Bishop of the place for some necessary work." Allusion is here made to the Sarabaites and Messalians, fanatics, who, under pretence of strictness, committed many excesses, and were generally reprobated by good men. The authority of the Bishop was thus positively declared, while the honour due to the monastic body was sanctioned by the same decree. At that time, no exception to episcopal rule was claimed by any appeal to the Pope. If we may attribute partiality to the see of Rome, it inclined certainly to the side of the clergy against the monks. There are angry expressions on record, of Pope Celestine, who lived about this very time. They were called forth by the great tendency of the age to escape from ecclesiastical obedience, and by the excesses of fanaticism. The discipline and order of the hierarchy were the great object at which the Church of Rome aimed in the fifth century. And to this, not to any settled disapprobation of the system, must be attributed the occasional rebukes which the Popes directed against the monks. At Rome, as well as in the rest of Christendom, religious houses had been established, and after the first impression of strangeness had rapidly passed away, obtained the same favour as elsewhere.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The passages alluded to by Guizot, in his endeavour to establish the contrary opinion, can hardly be said to make for him; the opposite inference would be best drawn from them, especially when compared with others of the same writers.

Monasticism was introduced into the West in the following manner. In 340, St. Athanasius, during the troubles occasioned by the Arians, came to Rome, and there made known the practices of Antony and other Egyptian monks.<sup>1</sup> Convents were established forthwith in that city. St. Eusebius, of Vercelli, carried out the same plan in other parts of Italy, and soon after Milan followed the example.<sup>2</sup> Hence St. Martin issued to found a monastery at Tours, as we have seen. Two thousand persons in process of time are said to have congregated under his discipline.<sup>3</sup> But no fixed rule such as afterwards was instituted, determined all their actions. Sulpitius Severus, the biographer of St. Martin, describes their habits after this manner:<sup>4</sup> "St. Martin made himself a monastery about two miles out of the city. So secret and retired was the place, that he did not miss the solitude of the desert. On one side it was bounded by the high and precipitous rock of a mountain, on the other the level was shut in by the river Loire, which makes a gentle bend. There was but one way into it, and that very narrow. His own cell was of wood. Many of the brethren made themselves dwellings of the same kind, but most hollowed out the stone of the mountain which was above them. There were eighty scholars (at that time) who were under training after the pattern of their saintly master. No one had aught his own; all things were thrown into a common stock. It was not lawful as to most

<sup>1</sup> See Giesler. Church Hist. Monastic System.

<sup>2</sup> Mabillon Acta, S. S. Ord. Ben. Præfat. § 7.

<sup>3</sup> Hélot. Discours prélim. and tom. v. p. 61.

<sup>4</sup> Vid. Transl. Church of the Fathers, and compare the original. Ed. Octav. Lugd. p. 498, 500, 517, 516, 541, 551, 566; *the whole of the first dialogue.*

nonks to buy or sell any thing. They had no art except that of transcribing, which was assigned to the younger ; the older gave themselves up to prayer. They seldom left their cell, except to attend the place of prayer. They took their meal together after the time of fasting. No one tasted wine except compelled by bodily weakness. Most of them were clad in camel's hair ;<sup>1</sup> a softer garment was a crime, and what of course makes it more remarkable is, that many of them were accounted noble, who, after a very different education, had forced themselves to this humility and patience, and we have lived to see a great many of them *Bishops*."<sup>2</sup>

There was indeed much in this institution which would influence the feelings of German, but it was as yet too indefinite to be used as a model for his own, and something more to the purpose had been introduced in his time by Cassian, from which Marmoutier itself may afterwards have borrowed. Cassian, according to some, was a Scythian by birth ; but more probably he was a native of Provence, in France. In his early youth he went to Palestine, and then became a monk, at Bethlehem. After this, with one companion, he visited the deserts of Egypt, and familiarised himself with the habits of the chief orders of solitaries.<sup>3</sup> He then went to Constantinople, was ordained deacon by St. Chrysostom, and passing through Rome, came into France, and stopped at Marseilles, where he received the Priesthood and built a monastery in honour of St. Peter and St. Victor the Martyr. This

<sup>1</sup> See the print in Héliot, tom. i. p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> Sacerdotes. That this is the sense of the word in the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries, see Ducange ad vocem.

<sup>3</sup> Héliot, tom. v. p. 154. Fleury Hist. Eccl. Lib. xxiv.

was in 409. He also founded a convent for women. He introduced the customs of the Egyptian monks; and his rule, which he explained in his books concerning monastic institutions, became the chief pattern in France till the reform of St. Benedict. The most famous monastery of all, namely, that of Lerins, which St. Honoratus founded a year after that of St. Victor, in 410, certainly borrowed many of its regulations from Cassian, who began to write about 420. And with this establishment German would have been well acquainted from a variety of sources, among which was his intimacy with St. Hilary of Arles, who had been Abbot of Lerins, and St. Lupus of Troyes, once a monk of the same place, and the brother of the famous Vincentius Lirinensis.

Although the works of Cassian convey the most definite idea to be obtained of the rise of Monasticism in Gaul, yet the introduction of Egyptian customs there described naturally was attended with some changes, owing to the climate and different education of the natives. Moreover it is the remark of the writer himself, that no uniform plan was carried out in any country, and that there were nearly as many forms and rules as there were cells and monasteries. And such was the state of things till St. Benedict, in the sixth century, brought in a more perfect code. Till then, the superior's will was sometimes the law; sometimes custom and tradition authorized any particular form; again sometimes a few statutes were written. The unanimity and consent of the monks was the pledge of their obedience and conformity, as perhaps would be the case were the monastic system reviving in our own country. There was, so to *say*, but one order of monks at the time, all subjected

to one main law, renunciation of the world, and ascetic life. Nevertheless a type existed of all the institutions of the fourth and fifth centuries ; namely, the Egyptian cœnobites. St. Basil adopted their usages in Asia Minor, St. Athanasius brought them into repute in Italy, and Cassian established them in Gaul. The principal alterations which were here made regarded the food and clothing of the Western monks. The natives of Gaul could not content themselves with the very scanty allowance of the Egyptians, nor could they endure the cold of a northern climate without additional covering.<sup>1</sup> "We cannot, said Cassian, be content with simple socks, and with one tunic, on account of the severity of the winter, and so small a hood as the Egyptians wear, would provoke laughter rather than edify the people." Moreover, the practice of manual labour was frequently laid aside, and reading and writing substituted. Thus, under St. Martin, the monks had been taught to transcribe books. Lerins it is well known was the seat of learning and literary occupations. Another deviation not to be overlooked, was the use recommended by Cassian of daily prayers in common, after the example of some monks in Palestine. For whereas the Egyptians only assembled for nocturns and vespers, other eastern monks observed the hours also of tierce, sext, and nones.<sup>2</sup>

It would exceed the limits of these pages to enter into any further details concerning the customs of these religious institutions. The spirit however which presided over them may be in part understood by the fol-

<sup>1</sup> The saying was : "Edacitas in Græcis gula est, in Gallis natura." Sulp. Sever.

<sup>2</sup> Fleury Hist. Eccl. Lib. xxiv.

lowing sketch of the Egyptians extracted from Cassian's works.<sup>1</sup> "They came together, he says, to pray at evening and night, and each time recited twelve psalms, according to the instructions given, as they believed, to their forefathers, by an angel who came and sang eleven psalms among them, with a prayer after each, and then added a twelfth, with a hallelujah, after which he disappeared. They read also two lessons, one out of the Old Testament, and one out of the New ; except on Saturdays, Sundays, and the Easter season, at which times they only read the New Testament, at one lesson the Epistles or the Acts, at the other the Gospels. After each Psalm, they prayed standing, with their hands extended, then prostrated themselves for an instant, and arose immediately for fear of falling asleep, copying the motions of him who directed the prayers. A profound silence reigned in the assembly however large it might be. One voice alone was heard, namely, that of the Chanter who recited the Psalm, or of the Priest who said the Prayer. The Chanter stood upright ; the rest were seated on low stools, because their fasting and labour rendered them unfit for a standing posture. If the Psalms were long, they divided them, desirous not to recite much and rapidly, but to pay great attention. The signal for prayer was given by a horn, and one was appointed to awake the brethren for the nightly prayer. On Saturdays and Sundays they assembled at nine in the morning for the Holy Communion."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Fleury Hist. Eccl. Lib. xx., and more at length, Cellier Aut. Eccl. tom. xiii.

<sup>2</sup> It does not appear that Saturday was ever kept up in the West, as it was in the East, with that reverence which the Jewish Sabbath had taught the Eastern nation.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*St German and St. Mamertinus.*

ONE day, as German was coming out at the door of the monastery he had founded, he was met by a young man who had lost the sight of one of his eyes and the use of an arm. The young man, on perceiving him, fell down at his feet and did obeisance.<sup>1</sup> German had been apprized by divine communication of the visit, and when the stranger earnestly entreated his assistance, he answered, "Be not afraid, but have confidence," and stretching out his hand, raised the suppliant and kissed him on the chin. But the stranger threw back, exclaiming, "Far be it from thee, O man of God; my lips as yet are not purified from the embrace of the devil's altars." "Nay," returned German, "I am assured that this very night thou hast been urged from this pollution." The Bishop then took him by the hand, and led him through the monastery into the cell which he had reserved for himself, whenever he came to the place.<sup>2</sup> He there made him sit down, and questioned him on the cause of his arrival. Not satisfied with the account he received, he rebuked the young man for concealing some important circumstance, adding that he had been acquainted already with every thing. He afterwards conducted him to the town of Auxerre, and entered the church, where the clergy and a number of laymen were assembled.

<sup>1</sup> Quem procidens in terram adoravi.—Const.

<sup>2</sup> See *Hericus de Mir.* 22.



In the hearing of all, he then desired the stranger to give a complete relation of all that had happened to him. Whereupon the young man, who perceived nothing could be concealed, addressed the multitude in the following manner :—<sup>1</sup>

“My name is Mamertinus : I was a servant of Idols, and an ardent worshipper of Jupiter and the rest of the false gods, insomuch that it was with difficulty I could be dragged away from their images. On one occasion, while I was paying my wretched veneration to their statues, suddenly I lost the sight of one of my eyes, and one of my hands withered up. Supposing I had incurred their displeasure by some transgression, I poured forth abundant tears of penitence, and implored their forgiveness. As I was one day returning to the temple of the gods to repeat my lamentations, I was met by one Sabinus, who was clad in the habit of a monk, and wore the tonsure. After we had exchanged some words, he asked the cause of my affliction, and the religion I professed. “The religion of Jupiter, Mercury, and Apollo and the other gods,” was my answer, “and I am hastening to obtain absolution and soundness of body at their altars.” “You err,” replied Sabinus, “because you know not the truth, and this is the real cause of your sufferings. Had those gods whom you worship any knowledge and understanding, they would not remain blind, dumb, deaf, void of smelling, motionless, mutilated, or bound with iron and lead, as we see them. Of them does the Holy Scripture speak when it says,<sup>2</sup> ‘They have mouths and speak

<sup>1</sup> Mamertinus published the account himself, and it is inserted in Constantius's Life of St. German.

<sup>2</sup> Ps. 115.

not ; eyes have they and see not ; they have ears and hear not ; noses have they and smell not.' And with regard to their worshippers, the same Psalmist proceeds to say, 'They that make them are like unto them, and so are all such as put their trust in them.' Consider the punishment prepared for worshippers of statues, and then apply it to yourself. If you would recover your sight and touch, follow my injunctions. In the Church of Auxerre there is a man of eminent holiness, called German, (whose minister I am among the clergy.) Christ manifests himself to him as it were face to face, and the most wonderful cures are performed by him. Leave your idols, and go seek him there."

"I thanked Sabinus and desired him to direct me to the Bishop he thus commended. Pleased at my readiness he guided me to an elevation called Mons Matogenes, and thence showed me my road in the plain beneath. When he had left me I proceeded with some alacrity. And though the rain had not ceased to fall from sun-rise to sun-set, and my garments were soaked, nevertheless I continued boldly my journey. About five o'clock, however, as the night was drawing on, the rain increased with such violence, and the darkness became so profound, that I was unable to discern my way. It was with difficulty I arrived at the Cemetery.<sup>1</sup> The rain fell in torrents and repeated lightnings rent the clouds. I was in great anxiety to find a place of refuge. At last, by the constant glare of the lightning, I discerned a small cell in which there was a tomb. Having entered, and finding nothing else to rest myself upon, I laid me down on the tomb itself, igno-

<sup>1</sup> *The Mons Autricus mentioned before.*

rant of the remains it covered. Hardly had I entered, when a sudden light, equal to that of the day, shone through the cell. Not curious about the cause of it, I placed my little basket under my head, my staff at my side, and fell fast asleep.

“The thunder awoke me soon after, and lo ! I beheld at the entrance of the cell a young man in white and glittering garments. Struck with awe at the apparition, I turned myself round and lay flat upon the tomb. Prompted by fear, I gave vent to this prayer : “O God of the Christians, whom German doth serve in holiness, and who hast granted him that virtue which I am about to seek, deliver me from the dread which has seized my mind.” While I thus prayed, the young man at the door exclaimed in a voice full of the sweetest melody : “Holy Corcodemus, holy Corcodemus, Levite of Christ.”<sup>1</sup> When he had uttered these words, an answer came from the tomb : “I know who thou art, and hear thy voice ; tell me, I pray thee, brother Florentinus, what wilt thou with me ?” Florentinus replied : “Rise up quickly. The blessed Bishop Peregrine,<sup>2</sup> with the rest of his company, are assembled in the Church to perform their vigils. St. Amator desires thou wilt also come to their meeting.” “Nay, beloved brother, returned Corcodemus, return to the blessed Bishop and give him this message : I am not able to leave this cell to-night, because I am entertaining a stranger ; there is a nest of savage animals about the place who are only waiting for my departure to devour

<sup>1</sup> The Levites under the Judaic Law being inferior to the Priests, the term would apply to the Deacons under the Christian Dispensation.

<sup>2</sup> *Peregrine* the first Bishop of Auxerre. See above.

im. May God not deprive me of the benefit of your rightly office. There are two Sub-deacons,<sup>1</sup> my fellows, besides me, Alexander and Jovian, and Jovinianus is lector. Report this, I pray thee, to the holy Bishops."

"The young man then retired. The mysterious nature of their discourse made my blood run cold. Sleep, however, soon regained my wearied limbs. Sometime before daybreak, I thought I again saw the young man at the entrance of the cell. He called to Corcodemus, saying: "The holy Bishops, Peregrine and Amator, before they separate, intend to celebrate a Votive Mass,<sup>2</sup> and have sent me to invite thee to come and fulfil thy appointed ministry.<sup>3</sup> If thou art anxious for thy guest's safety, Alexander can relieve thee. But they request thee to bring Jovian the sub-deacon, and Jovinian the Lector." After this, the tomb opened, and there came forth a man of beautiful appearance clad in garments of the whitest wool. He left the cell and found at the door three others dressed in white, whom he saluted and called by their respective names. Then he addressed Alexander: "Peregrine and Amator have commanded me to go to them, do thou preside in this cell to guard the stranger from the savage reptile, with thy crew of seven."

<sup>1</sup> Hence it appears that the Sub-deacons were a proper substitute for the Deacons at ordinary offices. But for the Mass, it was necessary the Deacon should be present, as is shown a little below.

<sup>2</sup> i. e. "The Eucharist performed out of the usual time by voluntary impulse.—See Ducange *ad vocem*. One might conjecture it originated in the expression of our Lord: "With desire I have desired to eat this supper with you."

<sup>3</sup> Corcodemus had been Deacon in his lifetime, as was before shown.

"Afterwards I thought in my vision that the blessed Deacon took me by the hand, saying, "Come thou also, stranger, to the Mass." We then went together to the Church, where I beheld around the altar five persons standing, dressed in splendid robes. I asked Corcodemus the names of those who ministered at the altar. He answered: "He that is standing in the middle is the Bishop and Martyr, St. Peregrine,<sup>1</sup> with whom I myself was sent from Rome by command of Pope Sixtus.<sup>2</sup> The two persons at his right hand are Amator and Marcellianus, both Bishops, and those at his left Elladius and Valerianus, all which succeeded St. Peregrine in their turn."<sup>3</sup> The Deacon then left me and advanced towards them. Then I thought I heard St. Amator speak to the Deacon, saying:<sup>4</sup> "Enjoin silence, Brother, that undisturbed we may perform our office, for our brother Peregrine is in haste to return to Baugy,<sup>5</sup> and on his account we must celebrate the Sacrifice somewhat earlier."<sup>6</sup>

"Silence was then proclaimed and the Catechumens' Dismissal announced. In the mean while I remained in secret awe at the novelty of the mystery. Not daring to advance to the place where the Mass was celebrated, I stood where the Deacon had left me. Then St. Pere-

<sup>1</sup> See a previous chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Sixtus II. in the middle of the third century. Vid. Suprà.

<sup>3</sup> Hence it appears the middle of the altar was the chief place, it is here assigned to the Founder.

<sup>4</sup> It was usual for one of the minor clergy, before the service of the Eucharist, to order the Catechumens to retire, as they were not allowed to be present at the mysteries. Stilling. 229.

<sup>5</sup> Or Boüy, in Burgundy, where Peregrine had been buried. See Chap. III.

<sup>6</sup> "Consummare Sacrificium."

grine questioned Corcodemus about me. "He is my guest, said the Deacon, in order to protect him I refrained from attending upon you before." After this I was brought up into their presence. My whole appearance was different from theirs : they were dressed in white robes and I was in black. While I was musing on this difference, a voice addressed by one of the bishops to Corcodemus, resounded in my ears. "Separate the stranger from our assembly, and drive him from the Church ; he is unworthy to participate in this ordinance of grace, for he is a servant of idols." The Deacon was going to obey, when I fell at his feet and used these entreaties : "I pray thee, friend of God, to intercede for me with the Bishops, that they may have pity on me and break asunder the bonds of demons which shackle me." I was then presented to them, and Corcodemus received orders to place his hand upon my head.<sup>1</sup> After a second Imposition of hands from the Deacon, the Prelates instructed me in the duties of my condition and the ceremonies which I might assist at. Then they enjoined my guide to conduct me back to his cell and send me at day-break to German, whose office it was to impart spiritual grace to me. We then retired.

"Before we entered the cell, I thought I fell down at the feet of the Deacon, and desired him to tell me how many years had passed since he came to rest in it. "After the martyrdom of the blessed Peregrine,<sup>2</sup> on

<sup>1</sup> The Catechumens were not blessed by the Bishop but by the Deacon, Confirmation being a subsequent ordinance for the baptized.—Conf. Newman's Arians, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> St. Peregrine's martyrdom was May 16, during the persecution of Diocletian. Some, however, place it under the Decian persecution, nearly fifty years before, erroneously as it appears from Tillemont, *tom. iv. Mem. p. 481.*

the third day of the same month, but not till some years had elapsed, did I leave this world to meet the Lord. I and my brothers had wished to be partakers of his sufferings, inasmuch as we had been entrusted with the same Commission.<sup>1</sup> But not long after an Emperor was created,<sup>2</sup> distinguished for his Christian profession, who put an end to the persecution, opened again all the Churches, and appointed orthodox Bishops. We thus failed in our desires. My companions were Marsus the presbyter, Alexander and Jovian. Here they buried me. They afterwards, as I learnt by divine intimation,<sup>3</sup> died as Confessors of the Faith. Jovinian, however, the Lector, by God's permission, obtained the crown of Martyrdom."<sup>4</sup>

"All these things seemed to take place in my sleep. On my awaking, immediately the cock crew.<sup>5</sup> Remembering the circumstances of the vision, I made the Sign of the Cross on my forehead, as I had been instructed, and lying prostrate on the sepulchre, prayed in this manner with tears in my eyes: "O Lord God of Israel, who dwellest on high and beholdest all things below, and considerest from afar great things; beside whom there is no God;<sup>6</sup> thou who didst visit this

<sup>1</sup> Of converting Gaul. See Chap. III.

<sup>2</sup> Constantine the Great.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. August. "de Curâ pro mortuis gerendâ."

<sup>4</sup> Concerning these Saints, the most accurate account is to be found in Tillemont, Mem. vol. iv. p. 480.

<sup>5</sup> The crowing of the cock is an incident which is mentioned significantly by writers of this period, as bearing a mystical reference to repentance.

<sup>6</sup> These Biblical expressions are probably the colouring of Mamertine after his conversion; or he may have been instructed in the doctrines of Christianity before that event. Vid. Bolland. *ad locum Const.*

earth to recover the human race, and didst abide among men ; by whose merciful direction I this night, unworthy as I am, have learnt the secret of my salvation : grant that I may without delay be brought into the presence of German, towards whom I have been so far guided." I then rose up, and turned my eyes towards the Basilica,<sup>1</sup> where I beheld a large light which spread within and around it. At the same time a voice issued in chants and hymns. I stopped to listen. The strain which first broke on my ears was : " Let them all be confounded that adore carved images and glory in their idols." The next was : " Save thy servant, O God, who trusteth in thee." The third, " Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered."<sup>2</sup> On hearing this, I prostrated myself seven times on the tomb and prayed : " O God of the holy Corcodemus, receive him that hasteneth to Thee, and disappoint me not in my hope ; by Thy care and favour have I been brought to this place, where I have learnt the error of my ways." I rose again and turned towards the Church, when, lo ! another strain suited to my wants : " The Lord hear thee in the day of tribulation, the name of the God of Jacob defend thee." Strengthened by these sounds, I fell down a third time in prayer ; on rising, I found the light had disappeared. I had learnt the mysterious virtue of the Sign of the Cross, which I repeated on my forehead. At last the day returned, and having again crossed myself several times, and given thanks to my saintly host, I hastened

<sup>1</sup> The Church built by Amator at the spot where the house of Ruptilius stood. See Ch. iii.

<sup>2</sup> These were, the Antiphons sung at the end of the Psalms, probably.



to find my future guide and director. I enquired where Bishop German lived, and was told that to-day he was not in the town, but at a Monastery which he visited very often by passing the river in a little boat. I then asked the way to it, and proceeded thither; having stopped a little at the entrance, suddenly the Bishop came out, who, to my astonishment, was acquainted with my vision, and reproached me with endeavouring to conceal the circumstance of the serpent which lay in wait for me at the sepulchre."

When Mamertinus had finished his account, the whole assembly were filled with joy, and blessed God, saying: "Thanks be to Thee, O God, because Thou had foreordained this vessel of election for Thyself before the foundation of the world, in order to manifest in him the greatness of Thy power to all and without end." The Bishop then led him to the place where Remission of Sins was granted,<sup>1</sup> and having blessed the water as the custom of the Church was, he baptized him according to the usual rites. Mamertinus then addressed German: "My Lord, he said, inasmuch as you have healed me in my inmost soul, restore, I pray you, the members of my body, give me back my sight and my hand." German answered, "Dost thou believe that I can perform this for thee?" "I do believe, and for this purpose do I seek your assistance." German then took oil, and having made the Sign of the Cross on the eye and hand of Mamertinus, restored them to their former condition. The people immediately began to praise God for the works He accomplished through His servant.

<sup>1</sup> The Baptistery was often in ancient times separate from the Church, as is shown by the plan in Bingham. (*quod vide.*)

German then desired them to accompany him to the place where Mamertinus had lodged, to look for the serpent and her crew. When they arrived at the spot, prayer was offered up, and Mamertinus showed the cell and the tomb where he had had the vision. The Bishop ordered the stone to be removed ; eight serpents were found under it, one of which exceeded the rest in size. This was the mother. She raised her head and stared upon all, but especially German. "Thou wicked serpent, said he, dost thou still cleave to the heel of the human race, and dost thou dare after thy crime and defeat,<sup>1</sup> stretch thy folds over the limbs of the venerable Deacon Corcodemus ? As the Lord liveth, thou deservest death with all thy tribe. But since thou hast obeyed the Deacon, and hast not injured his guest, depart untouched and avoid henceforth the abode of man. Let the forest and desert be thy dwelling, do hurt to no one on thy way. Not I, but Christ, through me, charges thee." The serpent forthwith, says the writer of these facts, as if burdened with the mass of her iniquities, bowed the head and unfolding her long back, departed, and was followed by the rest. On seeing the vast size of the beast, all fled in terror ; German however remained motionless, and reproved them for their want of faith. The serpent, we are informed, was seven cubits in length.

After this, the chapel of the blessed Deacon Corcodemus, which from the thickness of the briars had been known to none, became the resort of all devout

<sup>1</sup> *Prævaricatio* and *Devictio*. The latter word is found in Tertullian for "victory." Possibly *Devinctio* may here be the proper reading, i. e. "binding," Satan being bound by the triumph of the Cross. See *Forcellinus ad vocem*.

persons, who studiously carried thither their voluntary offerings of piety.<sup>1</sup>

Mamertinus gave himself up to the monastery of German with such ardour that he never left its enclosure without command of his Bishop or his religious brethren. His holy life and divine knowledge became so conspicuous, that on the death of Alodius,<sup>2</sup> the first Abbot, he was appointed to take his place, and governed the monastery till about 468. He died near that time on the 21st of April.

The days on which the memory of the Saints mentioned in this chapter are honoured at Auxerre, are as follows, according to the Martyrology of that town, published in 1751.<sup>3</sup> Peregrine, on the 16th May ; Marcellianus, 13th May ; Eladius, or Helladius, 8th May ; Valerianus, or Valerius, 7th May ; Amator, 2nd May ; Corcodemus the Deacon, 18th May ; Florentinus, 27th Sept. ; Alexander the Sub-deacon, 4th Feb. ; Jovinianus the Lector, 5th May ; Jovianus the Sub-deacon, not known ; Alodius, 28th Sept. ; Mamertinus, 21st April.

<sup>1</sup> Culturam promeruit. Cellulæ votivam gerentes devotionem.

<sup>2</sup> Alodius is the name in the Martyrol. Antissiodorensē, not Alogius. It is uncertain whether Alodius or Alogius was the same as the Bishop of Auxerre of that name.

<sup>3</sup> See Tillemont, tom. iv. 480, &c., with respect to the chronology and acts of these Saints. See also Notes to Const. by Boschius, Bollandist.

## CHAPTER IX.

*German's First Miracles.*

WE have just seen that Mamertinus recovered the use of his sight and touch, by the instrumentality of German ; the following pages will record a series of miracles, which finished only with his death, and among which some were of the most astonishing nature. It has been remarked that ecclesiastical miracles are of a character very different from that of Scripture miracles ; allowing the truth of the remark, still it seems more applicable to the four first centuries of the Church than to the fifth ; and again, to public miracles, which affect the Church in general, than to those which rather regard individuals. The miracles of German, as will be observed, bear in many cases a strong resemblance to those of our Lord and His Apostles. They are not less striking in the power they evince, the effects they produce, or the publicity with which they were performed. If the consciousness of the agent be a prominent feature in the miracles of Scripture, it is not less so in those of German and others of the same period. Of course this consciousness rested, as in the Apostles' case, not on any feelings of self-sufficiency, but on faith in Christ's merits and power. Thus we have seen that German sometimes thought it right to declare that, "Not he himself, but Christ through him, gave the charge."<sup>1</sup> Among the earliest of his miracles is the following :—

<sup>1</sup> See last Chapter.

There was a man of a highly respectable character called Januarius. When the governor of the province made his round of visits, Januarius had to collect the tax-money, and carry it to the treasury. Prompted once by the vicinity of Auxerre, he deviated a little from his straight course to see German. In the meanwhile, he lost the tax-bag. It happened that a man afflicted with an evil spirit had found it, and absconded with it. Januarius, upon discovering his loss, was thrown into great alarm, and filled the town with his enquiries. When all failed, he ventured to require the restitution at the hands of the Bishop, as if he had committed the bag to him. Others would have received the charge with contempt. But German submitted at once to the responsibility, and promised in God's name to restore the money. It was the Sabbath day ; that is, Saturday. German caused the town to be searched with the greatest diligence, but in vain. Three days elapsed—no clue appeared. The tax-gatherer, in tears, pleaded the punishment of death which impended over him. German exhorted him to patience and confidence. Thereupon, he ordered one of those who were possessed with devils to be brought to him. By a strange coincidence, the author of the theft was the first introduced. German examined and questioned him closely, told him that the crime, (whoever had committed it,) could not remain concealed, and adjured the enemy of mankind to disclose the fact. No confession could be extorted as yet. The Bishop then left his house, and proceeded to the church, to celebrate Mass.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This would be on Tuesday, if it was three days after Saturday. In fact, every day this office seems to have been performed.

After he had entered, accompanied by the multitude, he gave the usual solemn salutation<sup>1</sup> to the congregation, and fell prostrate to the ground. While he was praying, the prisoner of Satan, who had been brought to the Church, was seen to be raised in the air above the people, and enveloped in a blaze of fire. His cries filled the place, and spread consternation among all. Suddenly, with a loud voice, he called out the name of German, and made public confession of his theft. The Bishop then rose from prayer, advanced to the head of the steps leading to the altar,<sup>2</sup> and evoked the evil spirit. The bag of money was discovered buried in the ground. The acclamations of the multitude were loud in German's honour, and the report of the action spread rapidly. The afflicted man forthwith recovered the soundness of his mind.

Not long after, a malignant fever infected the town of Auxerre. Its results were imputed, from their violence, to supernatural influence. Children fell the first victims : the glands of their throats unexpectedly swelled, and they were carried off within three days. The malady then attacked every one else, with a rapidity and severity which was compared to the sword of an avenging enemy. Medical resources were exhausted. At last, in despair, the people fled to divine assistance, and sought the intercession of German. He immediately took some oil, blessed it, and had all the sick touched with it. Its efficacy proved instantaneous ; the symptoms of the disease disappeared, and the city was at once delivered from all danger. It appeared, says the writer of the account, that the evil

<sup>1</sup> This salutation would be the "Dominus Vobiscum" probably.

<sup>2</sup> *Podium* is thus explained by Bosch. Boll. ad locum.

spirits had been the authors of the fever, for one of the demoniacs out of whom German was evoking the devil, at the moment of his last paroxysm, affirmed that the prayers of the Bishop had prevailed in putting them to flight. The sight of his piety and devotedness had provoked their fury to exert itself in tormenting his flock.

It was the custom of German to visit, on alternate days, the Church and the Monastery, to superintend the functions of the Clergy on one hand, and of the Monks on the other. One day, he was prevented from going to the Monastery where his presence was desired, and he excused himself on the plea of unavoidable business. He was not, however, detained so long as he expected, and he resumed his purpose of visiting the brotherhood, thinking to take them by surprise. It happened that in the meantime, in the Monastery, a man possessed with an evil spirit was thrown into one of his fits, in the middle of which he screamed out that German was already at the bank of the river, and could not pass without a boat. The Abbot who had received the refusal of the Bishop, imputed his cries to the evil One. But as he continued in the same assertions, Alodius, (this was the Abbot's name) sent one of his Monks, who brought back a confirmatory report. A boat was immediately dispatched, and the Bishop passed over and was welcomed by all the brothers. When he was informed of what had passed, he fell down to pray, and the Monks imitated him. While they were in this situation, the same fact occurred as was described above; the demoniac was suddenly raised into the air and suspended by the invisible chains of Satan, to use the language of the narrator.

When they got up from prayer, German evoked the spirit, and healed the man.

In the three instances here described, we evidently remark a family likeness. The power of the Prince of Darkness over mankind is the prominent feature of them. It is well known that exorcisms in the early Church were of frequent occurrence, and they have been enumerated among the miracles of ecclesiastical times with the avowed contempt of some modern writers.<sup>1</sup> Nor is there any way of procuring credit to them among those who are not strongly impressed with the truth "that we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness (or rather 'wicked spirits') in high places ;"<sup>2</sup> that is, against the "wiles of the devil." It is a fact, however, which must have weight with serious minds, that few things have been more universally realized in the Christian world for the first fourteen centuries, than the direct, and so to say, personal agency of the devil. Even the cool and cautious Eusebius speaks of Satan in terms strictly applicable to a visible and living enemy. In the eleventh century, one of the most distinguished writers<sup>3</sup> of his time fills a great part of his own history with examples of the presence of evil spirits. But these actions of German's were merely the prelude to the greater miracles which he performed subsequently, and which we shall see were more closely parallel with those of our Lord. It would seem they were reserved to the time when he should have received his Apostolic commission, and when contact

<sup>1</sup> See Douglas, in *Essay on Miracles*, p. xxxv.

<sup>2</sup> Philipp. vi.    <sup>3</sup> Guibertus Novingenti.




with paganism and heresy should require a more special manifestation of divine power. And upon enquiry, it will be found perhaps that a great part of those miracles which are considered the most wonderful, were done by men who had to convert nations,—St. Martin, St. Patrick, St. Palladius, St. German.

Two more incidents may here be noticed before we proceed to the more important events of German's life. He was once travelling in winter. Oppressed with fatigue and the effects of his long fasts, he retired towards the evening with his attendants to a deserted ruin not far from his road. The place was said to be infested with evil spirits; and it was conspicuous for its wild and rugged appearance. He was not however hindered from taking up his abode there for the night. His followers on arriving began to prepare their supper, and sat down to eat. St. German abstained from all food. In the meantime, the Reader<sup>1</sup> read aloud some pious work, after the manner introduced into monasteries, and which still is observed in religious houses. As he continued his task, German fell into a deep sleep. Immediately a spectre appeared before the Reader, and a violent shower of stones beat against the walls of the ruin. The young man alarmed awoke the Bishop, who in the name of Christ adjured the spectre to explain the cause of the visit. The mysterious personage answered, that he, with another, had formerly been the perpetrator of great crimes, for which after death they had remained unburied, and had been deprived of the rest allowed to other departed spirits. German having ascertained

<sup>1</sup> The Reader or Lector was one of the minor clergy in early times.

the spot where the bodies of these wretched men had lain, assembled on the following morning the people of the neighbourhood, and employed them in removing the ruins. After much labour, they found two corpses loaded with iron chains. "Then, we are informed, according to the Christian custom of burial, a pit was made, the chains taken off, linen garments thrown over them, and intercession offered up to obtain rest for the departed and peace for the living." Henceforth the spot was again inhabited and grew into a prosperous and flourishing abode.

During the same journey he retired one evening to the dwelling of some persons of humble condition. Though he could command the attentions of the wealthy and great, yet he often avoided them, and frequented the lower ranks of life. While he was thus lodged, he passed the whole night in prayer, as was his practice after our Lord's example. Day-light broke in, and to his surprise the cock failed to herald in the morning. He asked the reason, and learnt that an obstinate taciturnity had succeeded to the usual cry. Pleased at finding an opportunity of rewarding his hosts, German took some wheat, blessed it, and gave it to some of the birds to eat, whereby he restored their natural faculties. A deed of this kind which might have been forgotten by the rich, was likely to remain fixed in the memory of the poor. The appreciation of any action depends generally on the degree of utility which it conveys to different people, and circumstances which appear trivial to some are important to others. Thus could our Lord adapt His wonderful signs to the wants of men, at one time turning water into wine, at another multiplying the loaves, at another taking a fish for a piece of money which it contained.



## CHAPTER X.

*Britain in 429, A. D.*

“ABOUT this time,” says Constantius, “an embassy came from Britain, which informed the Gallican Bishops that the Pelagian heresy had widely spread among the Britons ; for which reason, they were requested to give their immediate assistance to the Catholic Faith. Thereupon, a large synod was gathered, and by the judgment of all present, German and Lupus were unanimously entreated to defend the cause, as lights of the Christian Church and bishops of Apostolic character, who, though bound to earth by the flesh, dwelt in heaven through their virtues. They, like heroic champions, readily undertook the task, heedless of the labours it involved, and forthwith proceeded to the work.”

In this brief sketch of the causes which occasioned the visit of German to our island, there is much that has exercised the ingenuity of the learned, and still more which requires illustration, to enable the general reader to obtain a definite view of his mission. For the first time, we are here introduced to the people of Britain, in a somewhat abrupt manner. Nor are we accustomed at present to the idea of our nation sending for assistance to France ; and interference from abroad in our religious controversies, is the last thing which most men would welcome. Two things necessarily demand explanation,—the nature of the Political Union of Britain with the rest of the Roman Empire, and the nature of that Religious Unity which bound

together the different parts, including Britain, of Christendom. Both these, it is hoped, will appear, by acquiring as briefly as may be into the state of Britain in the fifth century, the rise and progress of the Pelagian heresy, and into the circumstances of the Council which Constantius mentions. If the history of this period of our history has been considered uninteresting, it is for want of clearness and precision in our popular sources of information. Antiquarian researches are seldom read, and it requires some patience to discern the truth, amid their discordant views. To supply partially the need of this trouble, without pretensions to original investigation, is the chief object of the following pages.

Gildas, a writer who flourished not long after the events here related, tells us that Britain was situated on the other side of the Ocean ;<sup>1</sup>—there is nothing in the fact but what we all know ; but it is worth the while observing, that whereas the Atlantic, among the ancients, received the name of Ocean, the Channel which divides England and France was included under that appellation. Amid the devastations which a civilized age may be said to have spread throughout this rich country, there is still reason for all to admire its beautiful pastures, its luxuriant woods, and green hills. But in Gildas's time, it should seem that nature and art were tempered in that happy manner, which at once made the land habitable and fertile, while it left room for the poet or the hermit to indulge their love

<sup>1</sup> “ Trans Oceanum.”—Gildas Ed. Stevenson, 1838. p. 19. *Id. etiam Bed. Ephemeris Oct. 1. and scriptores ætat. passim. Lucan. Pharsal. lib. iv.*

for solitude.<sup>1</sup> He tells us that by the mouths of the Thames and the Severn, the riches of foreign countries were brought into Britain, and thence spread through the land by many minor streams ; that Britain was adorned with twenty-eight large cities, besides other fortified places ; in all which there was a vast display of strong walls, gates, towers, edifices some of which were equally remarkable for their magnitude and their solidity. Another author tells us the names of these twenty-eight cities, and as there are many which the reader may like to recognize, it will not be out of place to give them in the original, as well as the present idiom. It will be remarked the word *Cair* is applied to all. In the British tongue it signified City ; and as in the Roman lists of towns the word *Civitas* was prefixed, so it happened with the British word *Cair*.

1° *Cair Guorthigern* (a town in Monmouthshire.)

2° *Cair Guintguic*, *Norwich* in Norfolk, or *Winwick* in Lancashire.<sup>2</sup>

3° *Cair Mincip*, *Verulam*, where the Church of St. Alban's was built, and which was a Roman municipal city, according to Tacitus.

4° *Cair Ligualid*, *Lugubalia*, in Latin, *Carlisle* in Cumberland.

5° *Cair Meguaid* (in Montgomeryshire) called by the Romans *Mediolanum*, or *Milan*.

6° *Cair Colun*, *Colchester*, called by the Romans *Colonia*.

7° *Cair Ebrauc*, this is the famous town of *York*, which in Latin was *Eboracum*.

8° *Cair Custoiend*, that is the town of *Constantius*.<sup>3</sup> “ Here,

<sup>1</sup> Gildas, p. 11 et p. 15. Vid. etiam Ranulph. Higden. Hist. Brit. ed. Gale. p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> Nennius, p. 62, ed. 1838, Stevenson. Usher. Primord. p. 59, ed. 40. Vid. et Antonin. Itinerarium.

<sup>3</sup> Nennius, p. 20.

says Nennius, Constantius the Emperor (the father probably of Constantine the Great) died ; that is, near the town of Cair Segeint, or Custoiënt, in Carnarvonshire." There was an inscription in Nennius's time left on his tomb, which bore witness to his death. He had enriched the town greatly, insomuch that there were no poor persons to be found in it. It was called by the Romans Segentium, and also Minmantou.

9° Cair Caratauc, *Salisbury*.

10° Cair Granth, *Cambridge*, (in Gloucestershire, thinks Usher, though others believe it to be the more famous Cambridge.)

11° Cair Maranguid, called in Latin Mancunium, *Manchester*.

12° Cair Lundein, *London*, (Londinum) the metropolis of the kingdom.

13° Cair Ceint, *Canterbury* (Cantuaria.)

14° Cair Guiragon, *Worcester* (Vignornia.)

15° Cair Peris, *Porchester*.

16° Cair Danu, called in Latin Danus, *Doncaster*.

17° Cair Legion, civitas Legionum, *Chester*.

18° Cair Guricon, *Warwick*.

19° Cair Segeint, *Silchester*, near Reading in Berkshire, on the Thames.

20° Cair Legion guar Usic, *Cair Leon, on the Usk*, in Latin Urbs Legionis ad Iscam.

21° Cair Guent, *Winchester*, called by the Romans Venta Belgarum, (afterwards Wintonia.)

22° Cair Brithon, *Bristol*.

23° Cair Lerion, *Leicester*.

24° Cair Draitou, *Drayton* in Shropshire.

25° Cair Pensa vel Coyt, *Exeter*.

26° Cair Urnac, *Wroxeter* in Shropshire, called by the Romans Uriconium.

27° Cair Celemion, in Somersetshire, *Camalet*.

28° Cair Luit Coyt, *Lincoln*.

But these twenty-eight cities were by no means all that could pretend to the rank of towns ; they were

probably the principal. Gibbon affirms,<sup>1</sup> with apparent truth, that there were ninety-two considerable towns in Britain which had arisen under the protection of the Romans, thirty-three of which were distinguished above the rest by superior privileges. And in fact, Nennius esteemed the minor towns to be countless,<sup>2</sup> and Bede speaks of twenty strong towns added by Vespasian in one campaign to the rest of the Roman possessions, which implies that there were many besides ; and we have the testimony of Gildas himself, a contemporary, to an important town not mentioned in the list given, namely Bath, which sustained a memorable siege. On the other hand, while these cities spread affluence around and encouraged the progress of civilization, there were not wanting vast ranges of uncultivated ground and woodland, with all the beauty which nature alone can confer. It is almost proverbial that ancient Britain was covered with forests, and the easy growth of trees in this climate would confirm the saying. With all the limitations then which the causes of wealth assigned necessarily require, it is not difficult to enter into the spirit of Gildas when he tells us, "that Britain was also decorated with broad meadows and plains, hills remarkable for their pleasant sites, and adapted to the highest culture, mountains affording ample pastures to all kinds of cattle, upon which flowers grew of all colours, so as to present a rich picture to the traveller, who might think he beheld a bride adorned with nuptial necklaces and bracelets.

<sup>1</sup> Vol. iv. p. 151. He quotes Richard of Cirencester. *De Situ. Brit.* p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> "Innumera," Nenn. p. 6.—"Oppida," Bede *de sex. Aetat.* 4033 Ann.—"Badonicus mons." Gildas, p. 33.

ms, he continues, are lucid as crystal ; some-  
y wander about the land in abundant channels  
grateful murmuring ; sometimes, as they  
wly beneath the long shadowy banks, they  
fall into a deep slumber, forming themselves  
s of pure and icy water." England, then, in  
time, possessed the charms which it still owns.  
it lost them in those of Bede. England was  
peateous picture of Gildas.<sup>1</sup>

ding an account of St. German's deeds and mir-  
Britain, most men would naturally ask them-  
ch questions as the following : Were the Bri-  
they are often represented, in such a state of igno-  
d simplicity, that the grossest acts of deception  
practised among them without fear of being  
? Had they nothing of that distrustful spirit  
ealth and soft living introduce ? Had they so  
respondence with foreign nations, and were  
ill acquainted with their faith, customs, and  
o receive any one as an apostle or a teacher  
he assumed these characters, and claimed defe-  
nd belief ? Or again, might the subsequent  
d account of his deeds in Britain be so little  
abroad to the criticism of experienced judges,  
tale might be circulated without fear of expo-  
t as one at the present day might publish any  
of regions in Africa unexplored by all but  
? It is believed then that history furnishes  
ute negative to these questions. And before  
d evidence, there is this antecedent proba-  
at all ages of the world, especially those which

signis te *picta* Britannia textit."—Ephemeris Oct. 1.  
l. Eccl. Hist.



have succeeded the preaching of the Gospel, have been much more on a level in intellectual and political advantages than is often supposed. Man is of an elastic nature ; circumstances must be very untoward to check its expansion. They were not such by any means in the fifth century in Britain, as will be seen.

Britain in ancient times seems to have meant that island which now consists of England, Scotland and Wales. With less precision apparently it sometimes included Hibernia or Ireland. Nennius<sup>1</sup> gives the names of four races of inhabitants, the Scots, the Picts, the Saxons, the Britons. Three islands among those which are situated near the coast of Britain claimed the highest importance, the Isle of Wight, then called Inisgueth ; the Isle of Man, or Eubonia, or Manau ; and the Orkney Islands to the north, which went by the name of Orc. From these geographical statistics it was usually said "that the governing power administered justice to Britain and its three Isles."<sup>2</sup> Without stopping to enquire what truth there might be in the statement that the Britons were descended from the Trojans, like their neighbours the Gauls ;<sup>3</sup> that is, by the posterity of Eneas who settled at Alba Longa ; or whether their name was derived from Brutus the grandson of Ascanius : it is more to the present purpose to show that in the fourth and fifth century Britain was part of Gaul. The generic term Gaul, as a portion of the Empire, included France, Great Britain, Spain and Portugal. It seems to be agreed by learned men that the same language at this time was

<sup>1</sup> Nennius, p. 7. Ed. 1838.

<sup>2</sup> "Judicavit Britanniam cum tribus insulis." Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Vid. Dubos, tom. i. ch. i.

n by the natives in Gaul Proper and Britain. Pretorian Prefect of all Gaul had twenty-nine *ces* under him, seven in Spain, seventeen in strictly so called, and five in Britain.<sup>1</sup> There, *Vicarius*, or what we should call a Lieutenant-governor over each of these countries. The seat of government in Britain was at London or York, sometimes the one, sometimes the other. *Caer Leon* in *es* seems to have ranked next.<sup>2</sup>

residence of 400 years on the part of the Romans placed the nation on the same footing as the most important provinces of the empire. *Dacia*, *Scythia*, or *Arabia*, were only occasionally visited by Roman armies, and though often ranked among tributary provinces, would feel in a small measure the influence of Roman civilization. But Britain was a regular division of the Empire, subject to an administration similar in all respects to that of other parts. Legions to the number of six had been kept there for the repression of external as well as internal disturbance.<sup>3</sup> Every city had its laws and civil codes like municipal towns elsewhere. The imperial court itself had been often fixed

Julius Cæsar entered the mouth of the Thames several times, according to Nennius.<sup>4</sup> On the last occasion he fixed his camp at *Trinovantum* 47 years before the present time. This of course was no regular settlement. But it paved the way to one. In the year 48 after Christ, the Emperor Claudius came and reigned several months

*Julius Cæsar* Not. Gall. p. 69. Buchanan, Cluverius, Camden. *Brit. imp.* p. 13. ad Not. Dignitat. vid. quoque, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup> *Stillingfleet*, p. 199 and p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> *Alford An.* ad an. 401. ubi Camden.

<sup>4</sup> P. 17 and 18.

in Britain,<sup>1</sup> according to the same author and Bede, and penetrated as far as the Orkney Islands, which he made tributary. In the year 167, Lucius, a British king, with the rest of the petty sovereigns,<sup>2</sup> received an embassy from the Roman Emperor and Pope Eleutherius, whence it appears that the government of the land was divided between the ancient kings of the Britons and the Roman settlers. But in the year 208, when Septimius Severus carried on the Caledonian war, and afterwards under Caracalla his son,<sup>3</sup> the Island was definitively invested with all the privileges of a Roman province, which it preserved till the time we are engaged in.

Britain became a favoured country. Men of en rose first to importance among her downs and her plains—sometimes gained the imperial diadem in her defence; and they loved to return to the cradle of their glory. Septimius Severus died at York. Constantius died in Wales. Constantine the Great was born at York, and educated in the same country. Afterwards usurpers issued from the Island or reigned in it. With the exception of the continual aggressions of the barbarians—the Scots, Picts and Saxons—every thing tended to increase the prosperity of the nation. During the period which elapsed from Claudius's reign to that of Honorius in the fifth century, Whitaker, in his learned History of Manchester,<sup>4</sup> thinks the British monarchs of several tribes continued to reign, though with subordinate jurisdiction, and in spite of Gibbon,

<sup>1</sup> De Sex Ætat. 4007.

<sup>2</sup> "Reguli."—Nennius, p. 18. Bede de sex Æt. 4132, (not Eucharisto but Eleutherio.)

<sup>3</sup> Gibbon vol. i.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. i. p. 247–257.

“the public and private kings” of Gildas,<sup>1</sup> and passages of Nennius,<sup>2</sup> seem to favour the opinion. An island under equal circumstances must always be favourable to the effects of peace. The Romans brought thither with them their luxuries, arts, and sciences, which were essential to their existence, and the important colony had become the exact copy of the mother country. What Calcutta is now to London, London or York was to Rome. But the author just quoted will best stand in the place of other evidence.<sup>3</sup> “At this signal period (that now under review), he says, the five provinces in general of our country seem to have advanced very high in the scale of political perfection. And they even seem to have attained a more considerable degree of refinement, and to have actually existed in a more flourishing condition than any of them knew for many, very many centuries afterwards. All the improvements of the Romans had necessarily been introduced among us. Our mines were worked with the greatest skill. And our towns were decorated with baths, temples, market-places and porticos. Our architects were even so remarkably numerous and good, that a body of them was sent by Constantius into Gaul, to rebuild the ruined Augustodunum with greater magnificence. And so universally diffused were the riches of the kingdom, that even after the lapse of many centuries, and merely from the scatterings of negligence or the concealments of fear, the sites of all the greater provinces remain generally to the present times inexhaustible mines of Roman wealth. So absolutely false is the charge of barbarism against the Britons of this

<sup>1</sup> Gildas, p. 33.<sup>2</sup> Nennius, p. 38.<sup>3</sup> *Tom. ii. p. 6. Hist. of Manchester.*

period, which has been regularly transmitted from pen to pen through a succession of 1200 years."<sup>1</sup> This last sentence seems more particularly directed against the early pages of Hume's history, which are very inaccurate and insufficient, as he elsewhere shows.

However, that this prosperity of the Britons remained unimpaired till the great invasion of the Saxons, which was subsequent to St. German's time, is clear from the nature of the devastations which these barbarians then exercised ; for Gildas tells us their fury was spent upon the monuments of Roman and British wealth, their columns, towers, streets, high walls and fine houses.<sup>2</sup> And though towards the beginning of the fifth century the Emperor was obliged to recall, as we shall see, the legions that guarded Britain to protect other portions of his dominions, yet it was not to be expected that in twenty, or at most forty years, all traces of Italian refinement would have been effaced. Numerous alliances and permanent settlements of foreigners, would have taken place during the long period of the Roman connexion ; and as at this time the natives of Gaul had almost merged their nationality into the Latin citizenship,<sup>3</sup> so this island, which had been conquered by the same general was now as much Roman as British. Furthermore, a passage of Nennius, shows that in the later years of Vortigern, that is, about 450, notwithstanding the many departures for the defence of Rome, there was still a considerable number of Romans,<sup>4</sup> who kept that tyrant in awe.

<sup>1</sup> See also Alford. Ann. ad an. 401. "Romani cum insulam subjugârunt, &c.

<sup>2</sup> See Gildas, p. 15 and p. 32.

<sup>3</sup> See Salvian De Gub. Dei. passim.

<sup>4</sup> P. 24. One MS. adds, "Those that remained there."—*See Ed. 1838.*

During those forty years which followed the retreat of the Romans, Gibbon relates that the artificial fabric of civil and military government was dissolved,<sup>1</sup> and the independent country was ruled by the authority of the clergy, the nobles, and the municipal towns. Zozi-nus, he continues, very accurately observes, that the letters of Honorius are addressed to the *cities* of Britain ; and he proceeds to give the description of this government, which was essentially Roman in its forms, and highly indicative of the advance of British civilization.

If these inductions be true, it would follow as a matter of course that learning and literature were in a flourishing condition in this land. And in fact we do find the same state of things in this respect as in Gaul.<sup>2</sup> Schools and colleges were instituted in all the chief towns, and the usual rewards offered to professors and persons who distinguished themselves. Hence it could be said by a contemporary writer that the Britons were consummate lawyers.<sup>3</sup> Christianity, as elsewhere, increased the ardour for intellectual pursuits, and learned divines, as well as acute disputants, sprung up in the island. Fastidius, Bishop of London, flourished about this time. He has left some writings which are still extant. Faustus, afterwards Bishop of Riez, one of the most eminent writers of his day, was a native of Britain. Pelagius, (no honour doubtless, but still a case in point,) was also born and educated here. Thus the Bishops and Priests of this country, though poor, were qualified in all other respects to attend the debates of foreign councils as well as those at home. Some were present

<sup>1</sup> T. iv. p. 151.      <sup>2</sup> Stillingfleet. Origin. 220.

<sup>3</sup> "Causidicos Britannos."

at Arles in 316, A.D. And our churches attracted the attention of men a thousand miles distant, St. Athanasius, St. Chrysostom and St. Jerome.<sup>1</sup>

In the foregoing observations, little has been said which does not strictly apply to the time when St. German lived and came over to Britain. To complete the view of the political state of the country, a rapid outline of the leading events since the beginning of the fifth century is necessary. Those who desire further knowledge of the preceding annals of Britain must consult other sources, among which, the life of St. Augustine, lately published, will naturally commend itself.

By the continued aggressions of the Goths and other barbarians upon Italy and even Rome, chiefly under the conduct of Alaric and Radagaisus, the Roman legions were forced to leave Britain, about the year 401, to defend the centre of the empire.<sup>2</sup> Thus the island was left destitute of the chief obstacle to the invasion of the Picts, Scots and Saxons, which last, we shall see, were already known for their piratical exploits. Nor did these enemies lose the opportunity afforded them of plundering the northern boundary.<sup>3</sup> It was a proverb, says Gildas,<sup>4</sup> that the Britons were as little brave in war as they were faithful in peace. He returns often to the same charge, which is perhaps not to be accepted without many limitations. He himself had said that the expedition of the usurper Maximus into Gaul some years before had stripped Britain of her youth, which was the first signal for the attacks of the Picts and

<sup>1</sup> Alford. 401. Stillingfleet 178.

<sup>2</sup> Vide Alford ad an. 401.

<sup>3</sup> "Britanni non sunt in bello fortes, nec in pace fideles."

<sup>4</sup> Gildas de Excidio, 15 p. also p. 25.

cots.<sup>1</sup> However, so it is that little effectual resistance was made against the barbarians.

Opinions differ as to the abode of these people. It is certain that the Picts lived in what is now called Scotland, but whether they occupied the whole or only the southern part is not clear.<sup>2</sup> Gildas clearly tells us the Picts were to the north of Britain, the Scots to the west (a circione), which serves to prove the cots to be the same as the natives of Ireland or Hibernia, and such also is Usher's opinion.<sup>3</sup> It appears they were assisted in their incursions by Norwegians and Danes.

In the meantime, about the year 407, A. D., Constantine (whom none will confound with Constantine the Great or his son) was raised in Britain from the rank of private soldier to the dignity of Emperor, at the death of the Gratianus, who had been in a similar way elevated to the throne, and had been killed after a reign of four months. Constantine crossed over into Gaul, which was rapidly reduced, but was not long after conquered himself, and put to death by the generals of Honorius, the lawful emperor. This prince was now no longer able to guard his distant provinces, and in 409 he was under the necessity of exhorting the Britons to defend themselves as best they could, against their northern foes. However, in 411, the Romans, induced by the repeated requests of the Britons, again took the command of the island, and legions, with Victorinus the prefect, were sent there to protect it. Ten years after, fresh supply was sent by Honorius; and an engage-

<sup>1</sup> Gildas de Excidio, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 20, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Usher Prim. Index. Chron. p. 1096, alias Alford. Annal, item vide 406, 407.



ment took place, according to Gildas, with the Picts and Scots,<sup>1</sup> in which a great number of them were killed, the rest driven away, and the captives recovered. A coin on which this victory is commemorated, has been produced by Camden the antiquarian. It was at this time, apparently, that the first wall was made,<sup>2</sup> by the Romans and Britons conjointly, across the strip of land which divides Edinburgh from Dunbarton, between the Frith of Forth and the river Clyde, or as it is in the ancient descriptions between Bodotria and Glotta. The emperor Valentinian had by this time succeeded to Honorius, and the Romans again were recalled to protect him. As a matter of course, the Picts and Scots began their depredations afresh; they broke down the wall, which had been made too lightly, of mere earth and rubbish,<sup>3</sup> and poured into the province. Once more the Romans were entreated, once more they returned. Aetius, the famous general of the empire, who afterwards conquered Attila, at Châlons, and at this time governed Gaul, sent this last succour to the distressed Britons, with his lieutenant Gallio. The barbarians retired, and a new wall was built, more solid than the former, and apparently in a different line of country, from the mouth of the Tyne to the Solway Frith. It was then that the Romans, as Gildas tells us,<sup>4</sup> having admonished the Britons to look to themselves alone for defence, assisted them "in building forts at intervals along the coast, towards the southern part of the ocean, (meaning the English Channel) where

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Alford ad an. 428.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Usher, Index Chron. p. 1096.

<sup>3</sup> *Magis cespite quam lapide.*—Bed. de Sex *Æt.* vid. et Hist.

<sup>4</sup> De Excidio, p. 24.—Alford. an. 421.

r ships were stationed, because from that quarter the fierce barbarians were expected, (alluding to Saxons, who infested those seas) and then bid well to the natives, never again to return to the land." This last event took place not more than six years, according to Usher, seven according to Bede, before St. German came to Britain. At six different times, had a wall across the island been built or restored by the Romans ; first by Agricola, then Hadrian, afterwards by Septimius Severus, again Diocletian, then by Theodosius, and lastly, by the emperors of Honorius and Valerian. Henceforth the Picts and Scots harassed with impunity the exposed borders of northern Britain. On one occasion, however, we shall see, a severe check they met with at the hands of the natives, at the time St. German came to Britain.

In the mean time, a king of the Britons had come to notice. Vortigern is a name which, like that of King Arthur subsequently, stands out as the representative, so to say, of a period. In the ancient chronicles, from Gildas downwards, he seems to gather round him almost every event of importance that happened between the departure of the Romans and the arrival of the Saxons. If there is a special evil in it that brings about revolutions in states, Vortigern would be the personification of it. The nature of the circumstances, division within, expectation without, are all merged in the odium of one individual character. Vortigern introduced the Saxons into England. Vortigern's crimes brought down the vengeance of Heaven. Such is the theme of early historians. Vortigern, in Nennius, or the work which goes by his name, written in 858, A. D., and all those who have

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borrowed from his history, is closely connected with the name of St. German ; and as Vortigern is represented in colours which often remind us of Saul or Ahab, so St. German seems to exemplify the opposite traits of Samuel or Elijah. Here is a field upon which one would naturally expect the disciples of that allegorical school which has lately prevailed so extensively in Germany and elsewhere, to find a wide range for their fancies. It would not be surprising if the personality of Vortigern were denied altogether, (too gross an attempt would it be to deny that of St. German) ; or if he were supposed to be a mere type of a divided, unsettled, and decaying constitution, one generic name to represent a multitude of petty tyrants, which would necessarily spring up when all central government was broken up. But let us distinguish matter of fact from matter of conjecture. There is undoubtedly much mystery hanging about the person of Vortigern ; but Vortigern is, nevertheless, a true historic character. When the Roman government was withdrawn from Britain, in 409, (according to Bede)<sup>1</sup> the natives took the administrative power into their own hands. "The hereditary lords of ample possessions,"<sup>2</sup> to borrow Gibbon's admissible inferences, "who were not oppressed with the neighbourhood of any powerful city, aspired to the rank of independent princes, and boldly exercised the rights of peace and war.....Several of these British chiefs might be the genuine posterity of ancient kings, and many more would be tempted to adopt this honourable genealogy, and to vindicate their hereditary claims, which had

<sup>1</sup> Bede Epitome Eccles. Hist.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon, vol. iv. p. 152.

been suspended by the usurpation of the Cæsars..... The public strength, instead of being united against a foreign enemy, was consumed in obscure and intestine quarrels ; and the personal merit which had placed a successful leader at the head of his equals, might enable him to subdue the freedom of some neighbouring cities, and to claim a rank among the *tyrants* who infested Britain after the dissolution of the Roman government." Gildas and St. Jerome both inform us that Britain at this time was a province fertile in tyrants. Among these was Vortigern,<sup>1</sup> before he became king of Britain. According to Alford, he first was a chief among the Danmonii, and called Count of Cornwall, and sometimes Consul of the Gevissei. He had three sons, Vortimer, Categirn, and Pascent. About the year 438, it should seem Vortigern was placed at the head of the many petty kings who divided the land, that he might oppose the united strength of the nation against the northern invaders. Gildas, Bede, and Nennius, are uniform in calling him the sovereign of the country, while, at the same time, they indicate the weight which the inferior princes, according to their relative importance, must have had in the public councils and measures of the state.

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Gild. p. 15 et p. 33. Alford, ad. ann. 438 ; vid. Nennius, p. 39.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Pelagianism in Britain.*

WE must now pass on to consider the state of the British Church in the fifth century with that signal departure from its purity in the heresy of Pelagianism.

What the consequences of the cessation of Diocletian's persecution proved to be to the British Church, as well as to the rest of Christendom, are explained in the following words of Gildas : " The Britons raised again their Churches which had been levelled to the soil ; they laid the foundations of sacred edifices in honour of the holy martyrs, constructed, achieved and exhibited them in every quarter as trophies of victory. They celebrated the days of Festivals, and with pure hearts and mouths received and administered the sacraments ; as children at the breast of their mother, so did all the sons of the Church exult in her bosom."<sup>1</sup> It is well known that under the government of Constantius, the father of Constantine the Great, Britain and the western provinces in general suffered much less than the eastern empire from the Edicts of persecution.<sup>2</sup> But it was some time before the clemency of that prince found occasion to exert itself. While Maximian, the colleague of Diocletian, reigned in the west, the fire of persecution raged vehemently in the provinces of his administration. The cruel minister of the tyrant's fury, Rictiovarus,<sup>3</sup> filled Gaul with the blood of Martyrs :

<sup>1</sup> P. 19.<sup>2</sup> Vid. Eusebius ad fin. Hist.<sup>3</sup> Vid. Anquetil, tom. i.

Bale and Treves were amongst the most suffering cities ; in the latter town so many were put to death, that they ever after went by the name of the Innumerable. We have had occasion already to advert to this persecution in the case of the youth St. Justinus, whose death by some mistake apparently has been coupled with the names of both Rictiovarus and St. Amator, the former of which lived nearly a hundred years before Amator. It was in this persecution that St. Alban also received the crown of martyrdom in Britain. Under Constantius, whose wife, Helena, was a Christian, the Church enjoyed peace. This prince having come to the dignity of Augustus, was enabled to desist from all harsh measures enjoined by the decrees of the other Emperors ; and favour took the place of toleration which he had always shown. However, it was not till the edicts of persecution were repealed, that Britain, like other parts of the empire, fully recognized the claims of the Christian religion. Before that time, says Gildas, "the precepts of Christ were but lukewarmly espoused by the inhabitants, though some accepted them in their entirety, and others gave their assent less strongly."<sup>1</sup> But an important accession to the triumph of the Church took place in the elevation of Constantine to the empire, and in Britain, as elsewhere, the conquering Labarum was brought over the world to the spouse of Christ.

As a general fact the Arian heresy received less encouragement in the Latin Church than in the Greek, and though many barbarian nations introduced it in the fifth century, yet it was never long supported by the lawful Roman governors of the west, and uniformly repudiated by the ancient population.<sup>2</sup> Still it had its votaries in

<sup>1</sup> P. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Salvian Gub. Dei.

every country, and Britain did not altogether escape the infection.<sup>1</sup> But a more pernicious influence was in reserve for this land, which began to be felt in the beginning of the fifth century in the propagation of Pelagius' principles. In the meantime the external aspect of the British Church might on the whole answer to the following biassed description: "The British Church, says Gibbon with his usual irony, might be composed of thirty or forty Bishops, with an adequate proportion of the inferior clergy; and the want of riches (for they seem to have been poor) would compel them to deserve the public esteem, by a decent and exemplary behaviour. The interest as well as the temper of the clergy was favourable to the peace and union of their distracted country: those salutary lessons might be frequently inculcated in their popular discourses; and the episcopal synods were the only counsels that could pretend to the weight and authority of a national assembly. In such councils, where the princes and magistrates sat promiscuously with the Bishops, the important affairs of the State, as well as of the Church, might be freely debated, differences reconciled, alliances formed, contributions imposed, wise resolutions often concerted, and sometimes executed; and there is reason to believe, that in moments of extreme danger, a Pen-dragon or Dictator was elected by the general consent of the Britons. These pastoral cares, so worthy of the episcopal character, were interrupted however by zeal and superstition, and the British clergy incessantly laboured to eradicate the Pelagian heresy which they abhorred as the peculiar disgrace of their native country."<sup>2</sup> This political as well as ecclesiastical importance

<sup>1</sup> See Bede Lib. i. c. 8. and Gildas 19.    <sup>2</sup> Vol. iv. p. 154.

of the clergy in the fifth century, which was indeed a prominent feature in the condition of Britain, resembled in many respects that which was afterwards witnessed in Spain ;<sup>1</sup> and about the time that St. German flourished at Auxerre, it was frequently brought into notice by the repeated synods which were convened to stop the progress of Pelagianism.

There has been much discussion about the birth-place of Pelagius. Yet it seems pretty clearly established that he was a Briton. Bede has expressly declared this, and he is supported by St. Jerome, St. Augustine and St. Prosper, contemporary writers.<sup>2</sup> But from which of the British provinces he came is not so certain. The early historians of monasteries make him Abbot of Bangor, in Wales ; and his original name is supposed to have been Morgan, which signifies Sea Born, and which he dropped for that of Pelagius answering to it,<sup>3</sup> when he went to Rome. There is likewise some uncertainty with regard to the exact date of his birth. Probably he went abroad early in life, after having for some time studied in the retirement of Bangor ; for he undoubtedly was reputed a Monk in his own time.<sup>4</sup> Enquiring and ingenious men generally went to Rome to sharpen their natural talents ; and Pelagius, among the number, repaired thither. He lived a long time in comparative obscurity, though acquainted with St. Augustine. For many years he ad-

<sup>1</sup> See Guizot's Europe, 6ième Leçon, p. 116, &c.

<sup>2</sup> Bed. Lib. i. c. 10. August. Ep. 106, ad Paulam Hier ad Ctesiph. p. 256, tom. ii. See Alford. ad an. 404.

<sup>3</sup> Stillingfl. Orig. 187.

<sup>4</sup> Bede. Lib. i. ch. 10. Isidore of Pelusium wrote to Pelagius the *Monk*, and St. Chrys. called him *Monachus*. Cellier, Stillingfleet and Collier.



hered with zeal to the Orthodox Faith. Had this not been the case, St. Augustine would not have written to him in the following manner : " I return you many thanks for endeavouring to please me with your correspondence, and for conveying to me such certain proof of your soundness in doctrine. May the Lord reward you. Ever remain the same. And live with Him to eternity, beloved and longed-for brother, &c."<sup>1</sup>

While at Rome, Pelagius superintended the studies of several young men, among whom were Celestius and Julianus, who afterwards became conspicuous as leaders of the new Sect. Jacobus and Timasius were also his disciples and subsequently were restored to the Church. During this residence, Pelagius wrote his short Commentaries on St. Paul's Epistles and Letters to Melania and Demetrias. He was still considered orthodox, and his reputation was now rapidly increasing. " A man of learning and sense, and what is more, a very pious man and a Christian of no ordinary rank :"—such are the epithets which were applied to him.<sup>2</sup> But we may question the foundation, or rather sincerity of his profession of piety, when we consider that he is represented on other occasions as a sensual and voluptuous man.<sup>3</sup>

Prosper Aquitanus determines the year 413 as the time when he first gave publicity to his errors, about five years before German was elected Bishop. Honorius and Arcadius then divided the empire between them. " Pelagius, says Bede,<sup>4</sup> was seconded by Julia-

<sup>1</sup> August. in Gestis Palæstinæ in causa Pelag.

<sup>2</sup> Aug. de Gest. Palest. Collier, B. i.

<sup>3</sup> Isid. Pelus.—Orosius Apol. c. 27. Apud Stilling.

<sup>4</sup> Collier's transl.

nus of Campania, an ambitious man, and who thought himself mortally disobliged by the loss of a Bishopric. St. Augustine, and the rest of the Catholic Fathers, appeared vigorously against this dangerous novelty. However, their answers were not successful enough to silence Pelagius and his adherents ; but on the other hand, the distraction seemed to rise upon opposition, and gain ground by being confuted and exposed."

Such were the general features of Pelagianism abroad, but the promulgators of it in Britain come more within the present purpose. Neither Pelagius nor Celestius visited Britain after they had obtained notoriety. This at least is the general opinion. Pelagius, it is said, was an old man before he became famous. However, that his heresy spread far and wide in the island is positively asserted by Constantius and Bede, two good authorities.<sup>1</sup> Agricola, son of Severianus, a Pelagian Bishop, was the first public advocate of it in Britain.<sup>2</sup> About the time when he spread his tenets, edicts had been issued, first by Honorius in 418, and afterwards by Valentinian in 425, proscribing the Pelagian heresy, and they had been carried into execution with great severity in Gaul.<sup>3</sup> Popes Zozimus and Bonifacius had armed the secular power ; they are not however responsible for the excesses committed. It was in consequence of these edicts that Agricola fled from Gaul and came over into Britain.<sup>4</sup> He did not obtain a hearing at

<sup>1</sup> Bede, Lib. i. ch. 7. Constant. ad locum. Prosper Chron.

<sup>2</sup> Usher. Primord. 319. Carte's Hist. p. 182. vol. i. Ed. Fol.

<sup>3</sup> Stillingfl. 190. Alford. annos. 418-19. (The latter date is uncertain.)

<sup>4</sup> Agricola has been confounded erroneously with a certain Leporius who was in Gaul in the South. See Alford. Usher. Still. Collier.

first. The Britons were ever good Catholics. Little encouragement had been given to Arianism ; and now Pelagianism met with no ordinary difficulties. But so subtle and plausible were the arts employed, that by degrees they succeeded in spreading it almost over the whole island.<sup>1</sup> Whether it was received by so great a number of persons as might correspond with the extent of country it occupied is not perfectly clear. On one hand it was much countenanced, on the other it was vigorously opposed. One may safely affirm the Bishops in general fought against it ; and conjecture that many of the rich and of the enterprizing youth undertook its defence.<sup>2</sup> Several synods were convened to stop the progress of the disease. But there was need of some special instrument to reach the roots of the canker. Against common and temporary heterodoxy the Church could find resources in her mere constitutions and traditions ; but for deep and philosophic heresy she required the aid of those doctors and shining lights which are raised up for one special purpose and perhaps for that only. Pelagianism in its grosser form would at once revolt serious and religious minds. But Semi-Pelagianism, which approached nearer to the language of the Church, though it concealed a dangerous meaning, naturally imposed upon many and perplexed some of the most zealous and eminent men in Christendom. Its success, which was extensive, was moreover due in a great measure to the extravagant opinions of the Predestinarians, who, apparently snatching up hastily some

<sup>1</sup> " Totam fere Britanniam Pelagianam pestem occupavisse." St. Lupi. Vit. apud Bolland. et Usserium, 319. See Tillem. tom. xv. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Constantius's remarks, and Bede Lib. i. c. 17.

principles of St. Augustine without observing their connexion with others of the same Father, built up a structure of Fatalism very opposite to the intention and distinct statements of the Bishop of Hippo.<sup>1</sup>

As the limits of a heresy can seldom be defined, and one runs into another when fully drawn out, and none has any absolute existence, as being founded solely upon a negative of the truth, the clearest notion which can be given of the outward character of Pelagianism in the world, will be derived from the language of those who represent the general impression it produced. Sigebert, the historian, who compiled from early sources, tells us that Pelagius asserted, "That every man, by his own merits, can be saved without grace ; every one is directed to righteousness by his own will ; infants are born without original sin, and are as guiltless as Adam was before his fall ; therefore, they are to be baptized, not in order to be loosed from sin, but to be admitted by adoption into the kingdom of God ; and should they not be baptized, still they will obtain a blessed eternity, apart from the kingdom of God."<sup>2</sup> St. Prosper, who was a theologian as well as a historian, confirms this view as a whole. "Pelagius the Briton," he says, "published the doctrine which goes by his name, against the grace of Christ, teaching that every one is directed to righteousness by his own will ; and receives grace in proportion to his merits ; that Adam's sin hurt himself but did not bind his posterity ; that those who will may be free from all sin ; that all little children are born as innocent as the first man was before his transgression, and are to

<sup>1</sup> Consult Guiz. France, Stillingfleet Orig.

<sup>2</sup> Sigebert, Chron. ad an. 404, apud Alford.

be baptized, not in order to be delivered from sin, but to be honoured with the sacrament of adoption."<sup>1</sup>

The necessity of grace, then, was the leading point concerning which Pelagius erred. Accordingly, Bede, describing the heresy by its prominent feature, observes, that the author of it began to spread his tenets "against the assistance of grace." These short statements are sufficient to show that other important errors might flow from the same source. Thus, the transmission of original guilt from Adam to all his posterity, the efficacy of baptism, the weakness of human nature, were in one sense consequences of the denial of grace, and in another were the same thing, inasmuch as what is virtually contained in any thing, is one and the same with it. Which opinion was the father of the rest, if such distinction may be made, need not perhaps be asked, as no thought has any proper existence apart from its relation with others ; and what poor abstractions men make, are best understood by the concrete ideas or systems to which they relate.<sup>2</sup>

One more author shall be cited, whose testimony on the subject of Pelagianism cannot well be passed over.<sup>3</sup>

"The Heresy," says St. Augustine, "of the Pelagians, the most recent of all at present, sprung from Pelagius the monk. His disciple, Celestius, followed him so closely, that the partisans of both are also called Celestians. These men showed such enmity to the grace of God—"by which we are predestinated unto

<sup>1</sup> In Prosper Chron. ad an. 414, apud Alford.

<sup>2</sup> For more details, vid. Usher, p. 218, Prim. Ed. 4to. et Collier, p. 96, tom. i. from St. Aug. Gestis Pal. et Pecato. Orig.

<sup>3</sup> From St. Augustine's work upon the Heresies. Heresies, 88.

the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ to Himself,"<sup>1</sup> "and by which we are delivered from the power of darkness, that we might believe in Him, and be translated into His kingdom,"<sup>2</sup> to which purpose it is said, "No one cometh to me, unless it be given unto him of my Father ;"<sup>3</sup> and "by which love is shed abroad in our hearts,"<sup>4</sup> "that faith may work by love"<sup>5</sup>—that without this grace they believe man can accomplish all the divine commands. Now if this were true, in vain would the Lord seem to have said, "Without me ye can do nothing."<sup>6</sup> However, Pelagius being blamed by the brethren for assigning nothing to the aid of divine grace in the performance of God's precepts, yielded so far to their reproaches as was compatible with not placing grace before (*præponeret*) free-will, while, with faithless craftiness, he lowered the former, (*supponeret*) saying that grace was given to men, that by means of it the things which were ordered to be done by free-will might be more easily fulfilled. And by the words, 'might be more easily fulfilled,' he meant, of course, to imply, that though the difficulty would be greater, yet men might, without divine grace, obey the divine commands. Moreover, the same grace of God, without which we can do nothing good, they say exists only in the free-will, which our nature, without any previous merits received from Him, inasmuch as God only assists us so far by His laws and doctrine, as to teach us what we ought to do, and what to hope for ; and not, forsooth, through the gift of His Spirit to enable us to do what we have learnt to do. And by this gift they allow, indeed, that knowledge is granted

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i. 5.<sup>2</sup> Coloss. i. 13.<sup>3</sup> John vi. 65.<sup>4</sup> Rom. vi. 5.<sup>5</sup> Gal. v. 6.<sup>6</sup> John xv. 5.

to us of God, whereby our ignorance is dispelled, but deny that love is given, whereby we live piously ; as if knowledge, which without love puffeth up, might be called the gift of God, and love itself, which so edifieth that knowledge puff not up, were not the gift of God. They make void also the prayers which the Church offers up, whether for infidels and those who resist the teaching of God, to obtain their conversion to God, or for the faithful, to procure increase of faith to them, and perseverance in the faith. For these things, they affirm men do not receive from God, but have them from themselves, since they say that the grace which delivers us from impiety, is given according to our merits. This doctrine, indeed, Pelagius, from fear of being himself condemned by the episcopal tribunal in Palestine, was forced to condemn ; however, in his later works, we find him teaching it. To this extent even do they go, that they say that the life of the just in this world is free from all sin ; and consequently, that the Church of Christ is perfected in this mortal state, so as to be without spot or wrinkle ;<sup>1</sup> as if she were not Christ's Church who cries to God all over the earth, ' Forgive us our trespasses.'<sup>2</sup> They also deny that children born of Adam, according to the flesh, (*secundum Adam carnaliter natos*) contract by their first birth the infection of the old death. For they assert that they are born without any bond of original sin, inasmuch that there is nothing whatever that needs being remitted to them by a second birth ; but that they are baptized, in order that being adopted by regeneration, they may be admitted into the kingdom of God, that is, transferred from what is good to

<sup>1</sup> Eph. v. 27.<sup>2</sup> Matt. vi. 12.

what is better, and not by this renewal absolved from the evil of any ancient bond. For even should they not be baptized, they promise to them, out indeed of the kingdom of God, a life of their own devising, (*vitam suam*) which shall nevertheless be eternal and blessed. They also say that Adam himself, even if he had not sinned, would have died in the body, and that he did not die, as it happened, by the just effects of guilt, but by the condition of nature. Some other things also are imputed to them ; but these are they chiefly on which the rest, either all, or nearly all, seem to depend."

Those who have paid attention to the controversies which have divided the world concerning Grace and Free-will, will not be surprised that men of learning and real holiness should have been over-reached at times by the subtleties of Semi-Pelagianism, without internally assenting to its perversions. St. Sulpitius we know imposed a lasting silence on his tongue, for having once given too favourable an ear to Pelagius himself. And other good men might occasionally use language which was offensive to dogmatic accuracy, and yet was innocent in them. Of this class, as it is said, was Fastidius the Briton, who lived at the time we are considering. He was surnamed Priscus, and was Bishop of London, the oldest see probably of England. Some who have strained a little the exclusiveness of the Augustinian theology, as Cardinal Norris and Tillemont, use harsh terms with regard to the work of Fastidius which has come down to us, and is entitled "A Treatise of Christian Life.<sup>1</sup> But our

<sup>1</sup> See this work in vi. vol. August. Opera, ad finem, Alford, Cressy, Usher, Stillingfleet, Collier, Bede, Pitta.



English writers of different schools, are nearly all agreed in defending him. Gennadius, a very early writer,<sup>1</sup> has bestowed great praise on Fastidius, and is followed by Trithemius, a writer prior to the schism of the sixteenth century. He calls him "a man learned in the Holy Scriptures, distinguished for his life and manners, and eminent for his eloquence and talents."

Faustus, another Briton of the same time, who became in process of time Abbot of Lerins, and Bishop of Riez in France, has been also thought to entertain Semi-Pelagian views. Yet even Cardinal Norris, before mentioned, admits that he was revered as a Saint in the church of Riez, and his name was preserved in the calendar of the Gallican Church. It was struck out long after by Molanus, and Baronius the great annalist followed him, but upon admonition restored it.<sup>2</sup> One Martyrology observes that "his books are piously and learnedly written, and that miracles are said to have been wrought by him."<sup>3</sup> However Faustus is no obscure character in history, for he took a prominent part in the controversies of the time, and had the charge of drawing up the Acts of a Council assembled on the subject of heresy.<sup>4</sup>

On the whole, it is certain that the Bishops in Britain opposed Agricola and his followers by the most strenuous measures.<sup>5</sup> But though they assembled synod after synod, they were unable to suppress the heresy, and finally resolved to apply to foreign assistance.

<sup>1</sup> Gennad. Catalog.      <sup>2</sup> Hist. Pelag. lib. ii. p. 297.

<sup>3</sup> Vid. Bolland. Acta. Sanct. 16th Jan.

<sup>4</sup> Comp. Sidon. Apol. Lit. ix. Ep. 3-9. Ruric. Epis. 2. lib. i.

<sup>5</sup> Alford, ad. an. 420. Bede, lib. i. c. 17.

## CHAPTER XII.

*The Council of Troyes.*

SUCH were the events which preceded the mission of German to England. But we have, lastly, to state what was the nature of the authority he received, and what is known concerning the synod to which Constantius, our original informer, refers. Much discussion has been raised about this very point. It has been thought by many, that the question whether the British Churches were dependent upon the Roman See or were not, rests, in a great measure, upon the evidence relating to this circumstance. We shall first put before the reader that account which will here be considered genuine, and then state some of the objections.

Before the English Bishops applied for help abroad, Palladius, the Apostle of the Scots, had been over to Britain, apparently not having, as yet, received his regular commission of Converter of the heathen in the north of the Island,<sup>1</sup> and while he was yet Deacon.

Palladius was a Greek by birth,<sup>2</sup> and attached to the Roman See. When he returned to Rome, he carried with him the news of the danger to which the Church was exposed from the growing evil of Pelagianism, and possibly was the bearer of the intelligence to the Gallican clergy on the part of the Britons. When he arrived

<sup>1</sup> Vid. apud Alford Annal. 429.

<sup>2</sup> Usher thinks he was not a Greek, but this is of no importance.

at Rome, he represented to Celestine, who was then Pope, the state of that part of Britain which is now called England and Wales, as well as of those districts which he had purposely visited:<sup>1</sup> Urged by his counsels, Celestine communicated his own intentions to the Gallican Bishops, who either, upon the strength of the message, immediately convoked a synod; or when the communication came, were already assembled, in order not to lose time in succouring their Christian brethren in Britain. This synod was held at Troyes, in Champagne, where St. Lupus was Bishop, in the autumn of 429, and the Gallican Prelates, after due consideration, elected German of Auxerre to go over to Britain as Apostle, with the authority of the Roman See, and joined to him Lupus, the Bishop of Troyes.<sup>2</sup> Whether Celestine proposed German for the examination of the Council, in accordance with the information he had obtained of his signal piety and wisdom, or whether he left free choice to the assembled Bishops to elect whomsoever they chose, we are not strictly told. But the first hypothesis is probably the true one, and agrees well with the unanimous consent of the bishops in appointing him.<sup>3</sup> It will be seen, by reference to the passage of Constantius given at the beginning of a former chapter, that there is nothing in the view here taken which offers violence to his expressions, though there are some things which, in the brief description

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Prosper Chron. ad an. 429, and *Contra Collatorem*, ch. 41, 42.

<sup>2</sup> Vice suâ, i. e. Cælestini.

<sup>3</sup> It is impossible to say whether Lupus had the same direct authority from the Pope. Prosper does not mention him in this connexion. More probably, he was the proper appointment of the Synod.

he has given, are not mentioned by him. On the other hand, his omissions have been supplied from the authority of St. Prosper of Aquitain,<sup>1</sup> himself a witness even nearer to the times than Constantius, a more precise and less poetical writer, inasmuch as he was composing a chronology, and one who had closer connexion with the Bishop of Rome than any other Gallican author, at the same time that he was necessarily conversant with the affairs of his own country.

The objections to the account here given, and which have been urged with the greatest force by Bishop Stillingfleet,<sup>2</sup> are drawn up concisely by Collier<sup>3</sup> in his *Ecclesiastical History* in the following manner. "I have observed," he says, "that the orthodox Britons applied to the Gallican Bishops to reinforce them against the Pelagians, and that Germanus and Lupus were sent by a deputation of a synod in Gaul ; but it is objected on the other side that Celestine, Bishop of Rome, sent Germanus as his legate hither, and for this the testimony of Prosper is alleged. But this assertion seems sufficiently overthrown by the authorities of Constantius, Bede, Paulus Diaconus, Freculphus, Ericus of Auxerre, and Ado of Vienne, who all agree that Germanus and Lupus received their commission for this employment from the Bishops of Gaul. Baronius, who is always careful to set the Pope at the head of Church business, endeavours to reconcile this matter, and offers to make Prosper's testimony consistent with the rest. To this purpose, he tells us, ' that the

<sup>1</sup> Tillemont says, " Il paraît que St. Prosper a travaillé trois fois à sa chronique et en a fait, pour ainsi dire, trois éditions en 433 en 445 & en 455.

<sup>2</sup> *Stillingfleet, Orig.* 192.

<sup>3</sup> Collier, p. 103. tom. i.

Pope might approve of the choice of the synod, or might leave the nomination of his representative to the Bishops of Gaul.' But neither of these pretences will hold ; for Prosper affirms Celestine sent him, *vice suá*, in his own stead, which is very different from appointing a council to choose one to be sent. And Constantius affirms, 'that Germanus and Lupus undertook their voyage immediately,' which is a sign they did not stay for the Pope's instructions and approbation. Besides, the Gallican Bishops and Celestine had no good understanding at this time of day, they being looked upon at Rome as somewhat inclined to Semi-Pelagianism. This makes it highly improbable, that either Celestine should refer the choice of his legate to these prelates, or that they should wait for his direction. There are likewise some different accounts in chronology, hardly to be reconciled. As to the testimony of Prosper, about Celestine's sending St. German, it may be answered ; first, that the Prosper published by Pithoeus, never mentions it. Secondly, Prosper in his tract against Cassian, which undoubtedly belongs to him, does not affirm it. For there he only declares that Celestine took care to disengage Britain from Pelagianism. To this we may add, that supposing Prosper's testimony is not interpolated, yet Constantius's authority is preferable to Prosper's in this matter : for Constantius was not only in a manner contemporary with St. German, but likewise a person of great eminency, as appears by Sidonius Apollinaris's Letters, and wrote with great exactness even by the confession of Baronius. Neither does Constantius stand single in this point, but the author of the Life of St. Lupus gives account, and so does Bede, and the rest of the historians above mentioned."

Having given Collier's words, let us see whether they have in reality that weight which at first sight they appear to have, with an especial reference to the more laboured dissertation of Stillingfleet, to whom Collier is chiefly indebted.

The authorities of Constantius, Bede, Paulus Diaconus, Freculphus, Erricus of Auxerre, and Ado of Vienne, are opposed to Prosper. Now it so happens that Constantius is the only one of these that can be cited as an original testimony, for all have borrowed from him even his very expressions, and all lived long after the events they commemorate. Bede wrote nearly three centuries after ; and Paulus Diaconus, Freculphus, Ado of Vienne, and Erricus of Auxerre, flourished about a century later than Bede.<sup>1</sup> It would have been desirable that Usher, Stillingfleet, and Collier had given distinct references to these authors whom they cite among the other testimonies which they likewise appeal to, but with greater precision. If we except Bede, their writings are not very generally known, and are found in few collections.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to Bede, any one who will take the trouble to inspect his account of German's mission to Britain in all its circumstances will at once perceive that Bede has closely followed Constantius through several successive pages, so as to make it unquestionable that he was guided by Constantius alone in his relation

<sup>1</sup> Bede was born 673, and died 735, or later. Collier 294. Paulus Diaconus, called Warnefrid, born 740. Freculphus born at the end of the eighth century, Bishop of Lisieux. Ado, Archbishop of Vienne, born about 800. Vid. Biog. Univer. Erricus of Auxerre dedicated his book to Charles le Chauve, in 876. Vid. Boll. Commen. Præv.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Eccl. Hist. ch. xvii.



of those circumstances which are mentioned by this author. Constantius had said nothing about the originators of the heresy in Britain ; this Bede first supplies apparently from Prosper. He says, "The Pelagian heresy introduced by Agricola, the son of Severianus, a Pelagian Bishop, had infected the faith of the Britons. But when the nation refused to accept this perverse doctrine and blaspheme in any way against the grace of Christ, and yet were not able to refute the deceits of these impious tenets, they adopted the salutary course of applying to the Gallican Bishops for assistance in their religious contest." He then falls into the narrative of Constantius, in which he continues for five chapters, deviating little from his authority. He describes the synod mentioned by Constantius with no other difference than what the explanation of one or two words required ; while on the other hand, some of the very same expressions are used. As Constantius gave no hint of the part Celestine the Pope had taken, neither does Bede. He says a council was assembled, enquiry into the emergency was instituted, German of Auxerre and Lupus of Troyes were elected, and the two Apostles and Bishops lost no time in setting off for Britain. But he says nothing about the manner in which the synod was convened, or the reasons that prevailed, or the persons who directed the deliberations. On the other hand, Bede supports the view here adopted by placing the mission of Palladius to the Scots at an earlier date<sup>1</sup> than that of German, and he distinctly says with Prosper, that Palladius the Bishop was sent by Celestine the Pontiff of Rome to the Scots, who believed in Christ.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 430, A. D.

<sup>2</sup> Eccl. Hist. ch. xiii., and also *De sex ætatibus mundi. ad annum 4376 and 4402.*

his accounts therefore for the part which Prosper assigns to Palladius in turning the attention of Celestine towards Britain and the Pelagian heresy. On the whole, Bede gives nothing relative to the mission of German but what is found in Constantius and Prosper; while he omits to mention a fact which we shall see Prosper in two different works asserts.

Paulus Diaconus is the first in order of time among the other authors quoted by Collier. There are three historical works of his in the *Bibliotheca Patrum*; <sup>1</sup> in none of them can we find any statement concerning the subject in question. In his *Historia Miscella*, (p. 265, p. 266, p. 268,) during the period which extends from Constantine's usurpation in Britain, A. D. 407, to 511, there are indeed three notices of the civil affairs of Britain, but nothing is to be found concerning the ecclesiastical condition of that country. His work, *de Episcopis Metensibus*, is alike destitute of information on the point. And his history of the Lombards furnishes a mere view of the origin of that nation, and its fortunes from Justinian's time.

In the works of Freculphus and Ado we have something more to our purpose.<sup>2</sup> But then they are the mere copyists of Bede;<sup>3</sup> and their chronology is evidently false, for they make German and Lupus visit Britain for the first time, after the Anglo and Saxons

<sup>1</sup> Tom. xiii. *Bibl. Patrum. Lugduni.*

<sup>2</sup> See *Bibl. Patr.* tom. 14. p. 1189 and 1190. tom. xvi. p. 796-7.

<sup>3</sup> Usher p. 335, admits that all these writers have disregarded Prosper's chronology and followed Bede. Bede himself generally follows Prosper, and the reason for his departing in this instance, is probably that he had one of the early and imperfect copies of Prosper's *Chronicon*, which seems to have been three times written.



had taken possession of Britain. But let the reader convince himself of the little corroboration they supply to Bede's account, by comparing the following passages, the similarity of which requires not any scholarship to observe.

BEDE DE SEX ÆTAT.  
AD AN. 4376.

FRECULPHUS,  
CHRON.

ADO, CHRON.

Ad Scotos in Christum credentes, ordinatus a Papa Cælestino, Palladius I., Episcopus mittitur.

(Tunc equidem) ad Scotos in Christum credentes ordinatus a Papa Cælestino Palladius I. Episcopo mittitur.

Scotis in Christum credentibus, ordinatus a Papa Cælestino Palladius primus Episcopus mittitur.

AD. AN. 4402.

Hæresis Pelagiana Britannorum turbat fidem, qui a Gallicanis Episcopis auxilium quærentes, Germanum Altissiodorensis Ecclesiæ Episcopum et Lupum Trecassenum æque Apostolicæ gratiæ antistitem fidei defensores accipiunt, &c.

(Tunc) hæresis Pelagiana Britannorum turbat fidem, qui a Gallicanis Episcopis auxilium quærentes, Germanum Altissiodorensis Ecclesiæ Episcopum et Lupum Trecassinum æque Apostolicæ gratiæ antistitem fidei defensores accipiunt, &c.

Hæresis Pelagiana Britannorum turbat fidem, qui a Gallicanis Episcopis auxilia quærentes Germanum Altissiodorensis Ecclesiæ Episcopum et Lupum Tricassinum æque Apostolicæ gratiæ antistites fidei defensores accipiunt.

Surely these writers, distinguished as they were, cannot be considered as independent testimonies even if we overlook the late date to which they belong. Nor has Erricus of Auxerre left any passage which might shake Prosper's testimony. Though somewhat farther removed

rom the age of German, yet as a Monk of Auxerre, and a special enquirer into the life and miracles of our saint, he might be expected to throw some fresh light on the point we are considering. But any one who will be at the pains to peruse the poetical version he has given of Constantius, will be surprised to find how very little real matter he has added to his model. In his account of the synod he merely paraphrases Constantius without any appearance of having consulted other testimony.<sup>1</sup> This author is more worthy of attention in what regards the circumstances which followed German's death, than for any information strictly biographical.

To conclude what may be said respecting these authorities quoted by Collier and Stillingfleet, with some remarks upon Constantius himself : it is asked, why did his writer omit all indication of Celestine's part in the transactions under enquiry if there were grounds for believing it. The answer is, first that Constantius is a very unequal writer as regards plan and method ; he sometimes gives long details about one event, and passes cursorily over others of equal importance ; nay, he is silent on subjects which are of great interest. Thus, German's education and early life, his political career, the Bishops who consecrated him, the rule and customs of his monastery, (to mention a few instances), are left in great obscurity by him. His object was, in the main, plainly to give a narrative of the miracles and distinguished actions of German, in compliance with the taste of the day.<sup>2</sup> There is little or nothing about

<sup>1</sup> Moreover, often what he did not learn from Constantius, like the rest, he took from Bede.—Vid. De Mirac. 24. Boll.

<sup>2</sup> Hence the expression, "*vitam gesta que, in connexion with pro miraculorum numerositate, innumerabilium miraculorum exempla.*"—Prolog. Const.

Church matters, theological questions, and the like, although his great eminence in the literary world was noted in his own time.<sup>1</sup> In fact, they were not to his purpose. Again, Constantius may himself have been ignorant of the circumstances of the synod. Let it be remembered that he wrote sixty years after it was held ; and though, as a youth, contemporary with the latter years of German, yet he was probably quite a child when the mission of German and Lupus took place.<sup>2</sup> Councils were very numerous at that time, and especially in Gaul, where one every year was gathered, as any person may see by referring to Guizot's France, in which a list of those only, that are recorded, is to be found. It is not then to be wondered, if the Acta of this one should have escaped his observation, supposing them even to have existed at that time, and not to have been lost in the desolation which the barbarians, for the space of ten years, spread over the country, after German's death.<sup>3</sup> On the whole, Constantius has transmitted next to nothing concerning the fact, which he just mentions ; for where it was held, and what Bishops attended, and at what time it took

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Sidon. Epist.

<sup>2</sup> Compare his own words in the Prologue. "Tanta enim jam temporum fluxûre curricula, ut obscurata per silentium vix colligatur agnitio." Compare also what Dubos says, tom. i. 387. "*Si le Prêtre Constantius avait prévu la perte des livres qu'on avait de son temps, & qu'on n'a plus aujourd'hui il aurait été plus exact dans sa narration.—Mais cet auteur qui comptait sur ces livres a évité les détails qui s'y trouvaient & nous sommes ainsi réduits à conjecturer.*"

<sup>3</sup> See Hericus Prol. ad Miracula Germ. Garnier, in his Marius Mercator, hints that these acts do still exist, but they have not been forthcoming, and he does not say where they are supposed to be. xxi. Synod.

place, he has not told us, any more than by what authority it was called together.

What sanction have we then for asserting, that Pope Celestine appointed German his Legate to Britain, (as Baronius expresses it) with the understanding of the Gallican Bishops assembled at Troyes? We have seen it is that of St. Prosper Aquitanus. In the *Chronicon Integrum* of that author, published by Roncallius in 1787, and in Bouquet's *Recueil des Historiens*, tom. i. p. 630, we find the following passage, placed under the year when Florentius and Dionysius were consuls, that is in 429.

“Agricola Pelagianus, Severiani Episcopi filius, ecclesias Britanniae dogmatis sui insinuatione corruptis ad actionem (or actione<sup>1</sup>) Palladii Diaconi Papæ Cælestinus Germanum Antisiodorensem Episcopum vice suâ mittit, ut (or et) deturbatis hæreticis Britannos ad Catholicam fidem dirigat (or dirigat.)”

“Agricola the Pelagian, the son of Severianus the Bishop, corrupted the Churches of Britain, by insinuating his doctrines; but by the advice of Palladius the Deacon, Pope Celestine sent German, Bishop of Auxerre, as his representative, in order that, after defeating the heretics, he might restore the Britons to the Catholic Faith.”

This chronicle, say the editors referred to, is now considered the authentic production of Prosper by all the learned. But it has been objected, that it differs from another published by Pithoeus in the sixteenth century, which does not contain the passage just quoted. Now in truth, the two works are altogether different compositions; and though they may each be

<sup>1</sup> Bouquet.

brought as witnesses to what they each state, yet the silence of one cannot invalidate the testimony of the other. The Pithoean edition reckons the years by the Emperors, the other by the Consuls;<sup>1</sup> the former is very much the shorter of the two, and the style of both is different; nay, there is a passage in the Pithoean Ed. relating to the Predestinarians,<sup>2</sup> which, as Stillingfleet himself confesses, could not have been written by Prosper Aquitanus.

There is then no reason why the Pithoean Chronicle of Prosper, on the ground of mere silence, should interfere with the passage given above, as the genuine words of Prosper Aquitanus, which few contest at present.<sup>3</sup> With regard to their respective notices of St. German, they are widely different. The Pithoean Edit. has:—

“Germanus Episcopus Antissiodori virtutibus et vite districtione clarescit.” “German, the Bishop of Auxerre, flourishes, endued with great gifts, and eminent for strictness of life.” This sentence is manifestly very different from the former, and it matters little whether it is by the same author or a different one.

But there is another work of Prosper, which, though less explicit, is yet as satisfactory as can be desired, without being liable to the same objections of authenticity. We there find the following words:—

“Venerabilis memoriæ Pontifex Cælestinus,<sup>4</sup> nec

<sup>1</sup> See Recueil, Bouquet, 635.

<sup>2</sup> At least in the Editions of Labb. and Mang, though Roncallius corrects it with the note (*alia manu.*)

<sup>3</sup> Conf. apud Roncallium, Chronic. Prosp. ex MS. Augustano, p. 691, et Chronic. Vatican, p. 715, ad marg.—Tillemont. Art. St. Prosper.

<sup>4</sup> Prosper contra Collat. in fine. apud Alford. 429. et in tom. x. Appendix August. Opera Bened.

verò segniore curâ, ab hoc eodem morbo (i. e. *Pelagianismo*) Britannias liberavit : quando quosdam inimicos gratiæ solum suæ originis occupantes, etiam ab illo secreto excludit Oceani : et ordinato Scotis Episcopo, *dum Romanam insulam studet servare Catholicam, fecit etiam barbaram Christianam.*"

"Pope Celestine of revered memory, with no less diligence and care, delivered Britain from the same disease ; for he banished from those remote and sea-girt provinces certain adversaries of Divine Grace, who were taking possession of the soil whence they had originated ; and having ordained a Bishop for the Scots, (*Palladius*) while he endeavoured to preserve that part of the island which was Roman, in the Catholic faith, (*i. e. through St. German*) he also made that part which was barbarian, Christian (*by means of Palladius.*)"

Prosper here assigns to Pope Celestine the office of removing Pelagianism from Britain. Now there are only two occasions on record when that heresy, after disturbing the country, was extirpated by foreign assistance, namely, when German came over for the first and second times. And it is agreed on all sides that the second time was long after Celestine's death.<sup>1</sup> It remains, therefore, that when German came to Britain the first time, then Celestine might rightly be said to deliver this island from the heresy ; that is, German acted as his representative or Legate.<sup>2</sup> It is not intended that these titles signified precisely what they did in subsequent ages, nor that they excluded the idea of the

<sup>1</sup> Celestine died 432. German was in Britain the second time in 446 or 447.—Boll. et Usher.

<sup>2</sup> Vice suâ.

authority of the Gallican synod being conjoined to that of Celestine. This fact is elsewhere proved. However the two passages of Prosper, taken together, establish one another so clearly, that they seem to place the matter beyond question.

The chronological difficulties to which Collier alludes, are certainly more easily resolvable, by assigning the first mission to 429, instead of 446. Spelman and others, who have adhered to Bede's uncertain chronology, have involved their dates in the same confusion as that writer. And had Collier rather followed Usher than Stillingfleet, (who, it must be confessed, causes perplexities by attempting to overthrow what after all he admits,) he would have seen that Usher calls it a plain anachronism to postpone the journey of German and Lupus to 446.<sup>1</sup>

The date here recognized has been adopted by the majority of the learned ; the authors of *l'Art de vérifier les Dates*, Bouquet, Tillemont, Usher, Fleury, Carte, Lingard, Guizot, &c.<sup>2</sup> If Celestine had any part in the matter, it must have been before 432, since he died in that year. And the writer of the life of St. Lupus is so far from authorizing a date subsequent to this Pope's death, that he is one of those by whose testimony the chronology of Prosper is established. For, as Usher observes,<sup>3</sup> St. Lupus is said to have been joined with St. German two years after he had been made Bishop of Troyes, which event had taken place a year after he entered the Monastery of Lerins. Now the latest period to which the arrival of St. Lupus at

<sup>1</sup> Conf. Boll. Com. Præv. § vi.

<sup>2</sup> Carte, in a note, expresses a doubt, p. 182, v. i.

<sup>3</sup> P. 325, Ed. 4to.

Lerins can be assigned is 426, and consequently, the mission to Britain, which was three years after, must have been, at the farthest, in 429, and in this inference he is supported by Garnier and the Bollandists.<sup>1</sup>

It appears then that Stillingfleet, who urges the misunderstanding of the Gallican Bishops with the See of Rome, is tacitly begging the question. The Deposition of Chelidonius, in which St. German took part, and which is supposed to have irritated against him the Pope, occurred in 444. And if this misunderstanding arose from the Semi-Pelagianism of some Gallican Bishops, it is not necessary, in the first place, that it should have infected all, including St. German ;—in the second, in 429 Semi-Pelagianism had but just appeared in Gaul, and was, as yet, scarcely recognized or convicted ;—in the third place, though Arles, to which St. Hilary belonged, might be obnoxious to Rome, (a mere conjecture) yet there is no reason why a Council at Troyes, in Champagne, must share in the displeasure ;—fourthly, the names of none of the assembled Bishops are given, except those of German and Lupus, and why those, who are not so much as named, must be guilty at Rome, is still to be shown ;—lastly, it is going too much out of the way, to imply that St. German was Semi-Pelagian, because St. German was friend of St. Lupus, and St. Lupus was brother of Vincentius Lirinensis, and Vincentius Lirinensis was supposed to be infected with some errors of the kind. The answer to this is, that brothers do not always hold the same opinions, and friends do not necessarily agree with friends' brothers ; and Vincentius, who is supposed without satisfactory foundation to have written in fa-

<sup>1</sup> Diss. 2. ch. 22.—Comm. in Vitam Lupi.



vour of the Semi-Pelagians, is allowed, even by his accusers, to have written only in 430, that is, after the Council of Troyes ; while other authors deny that he ever composed the heretical work imputed to him. Nay, Ceillier, a high authority, thinks it is altogether very doubtful whether Vincentius Lirinensis was brother of St. Lupus, and he notices the silence of Gennadius, a writer near to the times in question.<sup>1</sup> And if it be urged that St. Lupus was commissioned to go to Britain, as well as St. German, which brings the last objection a step nearer, it is replied that St. Lupus also was appointed by the Gallican Bishops, and there is no authority for supposing the Pope to have nominated him, whereas there is in the case of St. German. If, then, the Gallican Bishops and St. Lupus were all Semi-Pelagians, it is not surprising, forsooth, that the Delegate should have resembled the Commissioners. But let us not imagine, unnecessarily, schism in Christian Bishops, heresy in Saints.

The recent editor of the very ancient Life of St. Lupus seems to have shown satisfactorily that Troyes was the place where the Council was held.<sup>2</sup>

From this last source, then, we learn, as well as may be, the place of the Council ; from Prosper, the intervention of the Pope Celestine and the date ; and from Constantius, the enquiry and decision of the Synod.<sup>3</sup>

It need only be added, that circumstantial evidence is in favour of the general view here taken. It was

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Ceillier, tom. xiii. p. 583 ; et Tillemont. Art. Vincent.—Petavius says the Commonitorium was written in 434.—Doct. Temp. vol. ii. ad Annum.

<sup>2</sup> Boll. Tom. vii. Julii.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Usher, Index. Chron. p. 1097.

by the advice of St. German, that St. Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland, went to Rome to get his commission, according to Hericus of Auxerre, whom Usher, who well knew St. Patrick's history, approves.<sup>1</sup> His words are as follows : "Patrick, the special Apostle of Ireland, during eighteen years<sup>2</sup> (*authors differ about the time*) remained under his tuition, and received great knowledge in the Scriptures from his instructions. Whereupon the Bishop, (German) seeing how great a divine Patrick had become, how excellent in his conduct, and sound in his opinions, and wishing a labourer so vigorous might not remain idle in the Lord's vineyard, sent him, together with his presbyter, Segetius, to St. Celestine, Bishop of Rome, that Segetius might bear witness to the merits of Patrick before the Apostolical See. Approved by the judgment of the Pope, supported by his authority and strengthened with his blessing, Patrick went to the regions of Hibernia, as the Apostle of that nation."<sup>3</sup>

Again, there is no doubt that St. Palladius, the Apostle of the Scots, was sent by Celestine. Both Prosper and Bede agree in this.

There is a probability that the title of "Apostolici Sacerdotes," which Constantius gives to German and Lupus, might denote that they were authorized by the one Apostolical See of the West. But the context seems scarcely to warrant this conjecture of Alford, and the frequent use of the word in contemporary writers, in the sense of Holy, and as we should say, Primitive, makes the other sense, which is indeed also found, the less probable in this instance.

<sup>1</sup> Usher, p. 1100.

<sup>2</sup> De Mir. Lib. i. ch. xxi.

<sup>3</sup> So Jocelin. Vid. Alford, an. 431. Stillingfleet 211.

But a better argument is deduced from the circumstances of St. German's journey to Arles *after his mission*, to which there will soon be occasion more fully to advert again. Auxiliaris was then Prefect, and he was no longer Prefect in 444 ; consequently, German must have been in Britain before 446. Again, if St. Eucher had been Bishop of Lyons when German passed through that town, in going to Arles, Constantius would have mentioned it, for St. Eucher was one of the most eminent men of his time, and Constantius was Priest in that very town. But St. Eucher was Bishop in 444, for he then joined Hilary and German in deposing Chelidonius, Bishop of Besançon. Therefore, when German passed by, it was before 444. Therefore, he was in Britain before 446. But of this more hereafter.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### *St. German's first visit to Britain.*

ST. LUPUS, who was chosen to be the colleague of St. German, was one of the most eminent men of his time. His Life, which is still existing, and is almost as ancient as the Saint himself, informs us that he was born at Toul, in Lorraine, of a noble family, A. D. 383.<sup>1</sup> His father was called Epirichius, who died early, and left the care of Lupus to his brother Listicius, which latter bestowed great pains on his education. When he grew up he married Pimeniola, the sister of St. Hilary of

<sup>1</sup> Bolland. xxix. Jul.—Vid. Ceillier, tom. xv. 40.

Arles. After they had been married seven years, by mutual consent they parted from each other, and Lupus retired to the Monastery of Lerins, in the south of France, where Honoratus was then Abbot. There he lived a year, after which, as he was returning to Mâcon to give away all his fortune to the poor, he was suddenly carried off to Troyes in Champagne, and with universal approbation instituted Bishop of that place. His learning, his ardour, his eloquence, his holiness, ranked him among the most distinguished Bishops of Gaul. He was an intimate friend of St. Sidonius Apollinaris, with whom some fragments of his correspondence remain. He is there called by Sidonius a Father of Fathers, a Bishop of Bishops, a second St. James,<sup>1</sup> in allusion to a similar expression of St. Clement concerning St. James the Less. He had been only two years at Troyes, when the synod which was held there nominated him Apostle to Britain in conjunction with St. German. The date of his birth will show that he was junior to German by at least five years. He was at this time forty-six years of age ; German was in his fifty-first year. This distinction of age may account for the somewhat subordinate capacity in which he is represented with regard to German in the following account of their joint mission.

The two Apostles, for such they are always called by contemporary writers, lost no time in doing the work which was committed to them. They directed their course towards Paris, through Sens and Melun, which, as we all know, is the straight road to England, and stopped at Metrodorum, now called Nanterre, about two leagues from the present capital of France. The

<sup>1</sup> Lib. vi. Ep. i. Et Notas.

inhabitants of the place came out to receive them on their arrival, and obtain their blessing. While German was talking to the people, he perceived in the midst of them a little girl about six years old,<sup>1</sup> who appeared to him to have the radiance of an angel on her countenance. He desired that she might be brought nearer to him. He then embraced the child, and asked who she was. Genevieve he was told was her name ; her father was Severus and her mother Gerontia. The parents, who seem to have been persons of consideration, were then called to answer the enquiries of German. When they arrived, endued with a prophetic spirit, he congratulated them on having such a daughter, pronouncing her to be a chosen vessel of God, and one who would hereafter become a bright example to all.

He then requested Genevieve (who was no other than the illustrious patron Saint of Paris) to open her mind to him, and confess whether she intended to adopt the holy life of a Virgin, and become one of the Spouses of Christ. She declared that such was her desire, and that she had cherished it for some time, and entreated him to add his sanction and benediction. Having exhorted her to persevere in her purpose, he led her with him to the Church of Nanterre, accompanied by all the people. The Divine Service then began. The two offices of nones and vespers were united, during which a long series of psalms were sung, and protracted prayers offered up.<sup>2</sup> All the while German continued to hold his hand upon the head of the girl. The office ended, and they retired for refreshment.

<sup>1</sup> 423, A. D., is assigned as the year of her birth.

<sup>2</sup> Nonam et Duodecimam celebrant. Vit. Genov. Jan. iii. *Bolland.*

The following day German enquired of Genevieve whether she was mindful of her late profession.<sup>1</sup> Upon which, as if full of the Divine Spirit, she expressed her determination to act up to it, and desired he would always remember her in his prayers. While they were conversing, German beheld on the ground a copper coin with the impression of the cross upon it. The interposition of God was deemed manifest. Accordingly taking up the coin, he presented it to Genevieve, and charged her to hang it to her neck, and always carry it about with her in remembrance of him. Other ornaments, such as the world offers, gold and precious stones, she was enjoined to renounce. "Let them, he said, who live for this life have these ; do thou, who art become the Spouse of Christ, desire spiritual adorning." He then took leave of her, recommended her to the special attention of her parents, and resumed his journey with Lupus. In remembrance of this present of German to Genevieve, there long remained among the Canons of St. Genevieve at Paris, the custom of distributing annually on her festival a piece of bread blessed, with an image of the coin impressed upon it. We may remark moreover how early the practice prevailed among Christians of carrying at their necks some token of the mysteries of their religion ; and also, that the profession of a religious life was a formal act, not merely an internal resolution of the soul.

The two Bishops soon arrived at the sea-shore. The winter months had now set in. But regardless of the weather, they embarked, says Constantius, upon the ocean with Christ for their leader.<sup>2</sup> The ship at

<sup>1</sup> This seems decided proof that the child was very young.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Vita St. Lupi. "Temporibus hybernis mari se committente."

first was carried out from the harbour of Gaul by soft gales, till it reached the middle of the Channel, and lost all sight of the land. Shortly after, the power of demons seemed to be roused over the wide expanse. Filled, as it were, with wicked and malicious envy towards the holy men who undertook to restore a nation to the paths of salvation, they immediately began to excite the storms, and cover the sky with thick clouds, which spread gloom and darkness over the horizon. The sails were unable to resist the fury of the winds, and the vessel began to yield to the weight of the waves. The sailors at last relinquished their post, and the ship was left to the sole aid of prayer. While these things were passing, the chief person in the expedition, wearied with previous fatigues, had fallen asleep. He was still in this state, when the tempest broke through all obstacles, and the ship began to sink. Then Lupus and the whole crew rushed in great alarm to their venerable brother and awoke him, hoping to oppose effectually his strength to the elements. In the midst of the danger, German remained perfectly calm, and calling upon the name of Christ, rebuked the raging of the sea. At the same time taking oil, he sprinkled some over the waves, in the name of the Blessed Trinity.<sup>1</sup> Immediately they began to subside. Afterwards German, with the same composure, addressed words of encouragement to Lupus and his fellow-travellers. They then prayed all together. In the mean time, the last efforts of the evil

<sup>1</sup> Alford, in this connexion, observes with Baronius, that this sprinkling of oil does not relate to the sacramental ordinance mentioned by St. James, but is to be referred to the example *proposed* in St. Mark.

spirits were subdued, and tranquillity was restored to the sea and to the air. The winds changed their direction, and carried the vessel safely towards the British shore.

We are not told precisely where German landed in Britain ; but, as Whitaker says, the harbour of Rutupiæ, or Richborough, between the mouth of the Thames and Dover, was the great entrance from Gaul to this island. It was there St. Augustine subsequently landed, and the Roman troops generally were disembarked at this spot, as the Antonine Itinerary testifies. When German and Lupus set foot on shore, they were received by a multitude of people, who had come from all sides to greet them. It appears the evil spirits, by means of the prophetic exclamations of some possessed persons, had given notice of their approach.

The fame of the two Apostolical envoys soon spread all over the country. Their preaching and signs attracted crowds to the Churches they visited. On their journey, also, they were accompanied by a large concourse of people. And such was the zeal everywhere displayed, that they were forced to stop and address the multitudes in the fields and highways. On all these occasions, they endeavoured to eradicate the seeds of Pelagianism from the hearts of their hearers. Nor did the event disappoint their expectations. Their boldness and conscious strength, their learning, orthodox teaching and sanctity, carried the feelings of all with them ; insomuch that the authors of the Pelagian leaven were obliged to remain hid, and mourn in silence the defection of their disciples. At last, they gathered their forces and resolved to encounter the two Bishops. Like the Arian faction at Constantinople, they trusted the display of worldly importance would

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prevail over the unassisted appeals of truth. They came to the Conference with a splendid train. Riches and glittering garments distinguished their party ; a body of complaisant followers was ready to support their assertions. The Synod (for such appears to have been the nature of the assembly where the two parties met) was attended by great numbers. Many Bishops and Priests, doubtless, were there, anxious to see what foreign assistance might effect for the destruction of a heresy which they had in vain endeavoured to stifle. At the same time, a number of the laity were allowed to assist, with their wives and children. It should seem some vast and open place was selected for the reception of all who were interested in the issue ; and the publicity of the Conference in itself was desirable, as a means of disabusing the people.

In all respects the contrast between the parties was striking. The language of the Pelagians, says Constantius, presented more of empty verbosity than forcible argument. And, indeed, the general effect of their harangues may have been such. But when we reflect upon the maturity to which the heresy had arrived, the acuteness which ever characterized its maintainers, the deep root it had taken in Britain, and the difficulty which the Catholic Clergy had experienced in their struggle against it, we cannot but modify the import of his expressions by the nature of the circumstances. The most elaborate and subtle discussions of heretics may sometimes, to orthodox ears, who do not perceive the drift of them, have the appearance of shallowness and irrelevancy. Again, any thing, in one sense, may be considered as unphilosophical and superficial which is not true. And after all, *it was the popular impression which Constantius was*

concerned to transmit. On the other hand, he says German and Lupus, who were profoundly versed in the Scriptures and theological learning, and by nature eloquent, were able to support the arguments which reason and conscience dictated to them, by the most convincing appeals to authority and tradition. The truth of this assertion is abundantly shown by the result ; for their adversaries were completely silenced by the answers they received, and even confessed their own errors ; while the people, astonished at their signal discomfiture, were ready to lay violent hands upon them.

Some suppose this Council, which historically deserves an importance apart from the scanty records which notice it, to have taken place at London, others at Verulam or St. Alban's. The latter opinion, which is the most favoured by critics, is derived from Matthæus Florilegus, who wrote in 1307, A. D., and is, therefore, no very safe authority. Camden tells us that some old parchments of the Church of St. Alban's bear witness that St. German went up to the pulpit, and harangued the people, in the place where there is still a small chapel dedicated to him. Spelman and Alford, who are followed by Collier, incline to this view.<sup>1</sup> However, as German harangued the people wherever he went, nothing can be inferred from the parchments of St. Alban's, as to this particular Synod. And Constantius would rather lead us to suppose that German removed from the place where it was held, to go to St. Alban's, which could hardly be said had he

<sup>1</sup> See also Clutterbuck's Hertfordshire. He makes the odd mistake of assigning this circumstance to 401, t. i. p. 6. Collier, p. 103. i. Spelman Concilia. Alford, 429.

been in the town. We are informed that the Acts, or account of the proceedings, are still in existence,<sup>1</sup> as well as those of the Gallican Synod before mentioned; but in whose possession they are, is a mystery. Boethius, a late writer, in his History of the Scotch, seems indeed, to be the only authority for assigning the present Council to London; and yet it is the opinion which tallies best with the probabilities of circumstances. London was at this time the most important town in the south; a Bishop resided there, who must have been the Metropolitan, if not of the whole province, yet of a great part of it. Besides, London was in the way to St. Alban's.

Scarcely had the Conference ended, when an officer in the Roman service, accompanied by his wife, advanced towards German and Lupus. He was a Tribune, and at that time his office was one of great importance, as it ranked next to that of Count or Duke. In all great cities, there was a Tribune, who had both the command of the troops and the superintendence of the civil affairs, and was responsible only to the governor or Duke of the Province.<sup>2</sup> The Tribune presented to the two Bishops his little daughter, who was blind, and requested them to bestow such relief as lay in their power. But he was desirous to try first the skill of their Pelagian adversaries, miracles having always been considered by the Church the proper evidence of true doctrine. But they who had now learnt to think more humbly of themselves, united in demanding her cure at the hands of German and Lupus. A short prayer was then offered up, and German, full of

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Boll. Comm. Præv. § 59. Tillemont, t. xv.

<sup>2</sup> Dubos, tom. i. p. 80.

the Holy Ghost, called upon the Blessed Trinity, pulled from his breast the little box of relics, which he ever carried about him, and applied it to the eyes of the girl. Her sight was restored at once. This miracle, performed in the presence of so great a multitude, gave the finishing stroke to Pelagianism. In those parts the heretics were totally suppressed, and the people restored to purity of faith. If we might credit the assertion of the author quoted above, Boethius, there were some who refused to renounce their false tenets, and who were burnt at the stake by the civil magistrates. It is true, the secular power had been armed against the heresy, and some severities had been exercised in Gaul through the imperial edicts ; but that a deed of this magnitude should have been left unnoticed by Constantius, when the context would have required at least some allusion to it, seems sufficient to disprove the supposed fact ; add to which, the cruelty which half a century before had been displayed against the Priscillianists, and had been so earnestly deprecated by St. Martin, would have left an impression calculated to avert any unnecessary return of it.

However, German and Lupus having concluded the conference, proceeded to St. Alban's tomb at Verulam, in order to return thanks to God. In this they did but comply with the custom of the country, in the veneration of which St. Alban held the rank of Patron Saint. His name is still familiar to most Englishmen, though his history is involved in much obscurity. He has deserved the honour of being called the first British Martyr, and was probably put to death in the persecution of Maximian, the colleague of Diocletian, the fury of which has already been adverted to. The famous Abbey which still stands over his relics, was not built till the year

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790, by Offa, king of Mercia, consequently long after German's visit.<sup>1</sup> But there was a Church or Basilica already there at this time.

When German arrived, public prayers were performed ; after which, he caused the tomb of the Saint to be opened and deposited within some of the relics of the Apostles and Martyrs which he carried with him, under the sense, says Constantius, that there was a propriety in joining in one receptacle the bones of those who at the most distant parts of the world had exhibited the same virtues. At the same time he took up from the very spot where the blood of the Martyr had been shed a handful of dust, which by the red stain it still preserved, bore witness to the fury of persecution.<sup>2</sup> This he subsequently took to Auxerre, where he built a Church in honour of St. Alban, which, says Hericus, was held in the highest veneration. It was such actions as that just related, which excited the indignation of the heretic Vigilantius, not long before the events under consideration, when he exclaimed : " We have now to see almost the rites of the Gentiles introduced under pretence of religion, a little dust forsooth, enveloped in a precious cloth and placed in a convenient vessel, which men kiss and worship." In answer to which St. Jerome said : " We do not adore even the Sun or the Moon, or the Angels, much less the relics of Martyrs ; but we do honour the relics of Martyrs in order to adore Him for whom they are Martyrs. We honour the servants, that their honour may redound unto that of their Lord."<sup>3</sup> But to return.

<sup>1</sup> See Moreri Dict. ad vocem. Bosch. Not. ad Const.

<sup>2</sup> Hericus Vita Metr. B. iv. § 94. and De Mir. § 7.

<sup>3</sup> Vid. Apud Thom. Aquin. Qu. xxv. Ast. 2.

Three centuries after, we are told, that king Offa found at Verulam the coffin of St. Alban, which had been hidden, for fear of the barbarians, together with these same relics of the Apostles and Martyrs which German had there deposited.<sup>1</sup> On which occasion, the people that were present, both clergy and laymen, were so moved at the sight, that they shed tears of joy and thanksgiving.

There is little or no credit to be attached to the story of the Monks of Cologne, who in the middle ages asserted that German had carried the remains of St. Alban to Rome, and that at a future time they were brought to their city. The body in fact remained entire at Verulam, where a chapel was afterwards built in honour of St. German and his visit to the Martyr's remains. This chapel in process of time formed a part of the great Abbey of St. Albans.<sup>2</sup>

After German had visited the shrine of St. Alban, he met with an accident (the only one which is recorded in his long life) which though not of a very serious nature, yet impeded his progress. Having bruised his foot, he was obliged to stop, and take up his abode in a cottage. During his stay, a fire broke out in the neighbourhood, which spread with so much the more rapidity as the roofing of the houses was of thatch, a circumstance not unimportant in these days of antiquarian research.<sup>3</sup> Men from all sides came to warn him of the danger, but he remained perfectly composed, and would

<sup>1</sup> Matt. Floril. apud Usseri. 329.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Dugdale, and a quotation from Matt. Paris, in Alford ad an. 441.

<sup>3</sup> Comp. Hallam Middle Ages, and an article in No. 3, *Archæological Journal*.

not suffer himself to be removed. All the buildings around were burnt to the ground, while that in which he was detained, as if by miracle, escaped the flames.

In the meantime, German continued to endure the pain which his accident had produced without accepting any remedy. One night a person clad in white garments appeared to him and raised him up. At that instant he recovered the use of his leg, and prepared to resume his journey. The reader will be reminded of the angel who appeared to St. Peter.

About this time it is supposed St. Patrick, the future Apostle of Ireland, came to visit St. German, and consult him about his studies and the means of converting men. This does not appear to have been the first interview of these Saints. St. Patrick was probably under the care and tuition of St. German several years before. There are few things better attested than their friendship and intercourse, and in all the accounts of St. Patrick's life, it is believed the names of both are united. Yet the exact circumstances of their connexion are seemingly uncertain and confused from the very variety of the witnesses. William of Malmesbury dates their intimacy from this journey of German to Britain ; and a few years after, supposes German to have obtained the sanction of Pope Celestine for sending St. Patrick as Apostle to Ireland.<sup>1</sup> These events, however, belong rather to a Life of St. Patrick. It is sufficient here to commemorate that union which existed between two such eminent men ; and it may afford a further proof of the holiness of both, that German was the friend of Patrick, Patrick of German. Constantius says nothing

<sup>1</sup> *Vid. Usher*, p. 840. Bede and Capgrave apud Alford. 429.

about it, but his commentator, Hericus of Auxerre, supplies the omission.

While German was detained by his accident, a great number of sick persons came to see him to be cured of their respective diseases. Others came to desire spiritual instruction. German healed the first, and enlightened the latter. The miraculous power which is assigned to him in healing sick people, can only be compared with that which St. Peter and St. Paul possessed, concerning whom it is said, that by them, "they were healed every one" whosoever had any disease.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

##### *The Alleluiatic Victory.*

WITH the names of the Picts and Scots, who, it has been seen, infested Britain during the early part of the fifth century, that of the Saxons has been mentioned in a previous chapter; which the reader may either not have observed, or may have looked upon as an anachronism. According to the chronology that has been adopted, the Invasion, properly so called, of the Saxons and Angles took place nearly twenty years after the first visit of German, that is, in 448, A. D., if we follow Alford, or in 450 if Usher be heard. But it has been proved beyond question, from contemporary writers, that the Saxons made occasional descents upon the island long before their final settlement. So early as the beginning of the reign of Valentinian I., that is, about 364, the Britons were attacked by them. And to secure them from the insults of this foreign enemy,



a subsequent emperor appointed a Comes Littoris Saxonici, that is, a Commanding Officer, to guard the coasts of Britain which were most exposed to their assaults.<sup>1</sup> Nay, earlier even than this, in 286, during the reign of Diocletian, Entropius tells us that the Saxons, with the Franks, infested the Districts of Belgica and Armorica, the latter of which faces the southern coast of Britain, which consequently must have shared in the calamity.<sup>2</sup> For all contemporary writers bear witness to the boldness and extent of their piratical exploits. "The Saxons, says Orosius the historian, who dwell on the shores of the Atlantic (what we should call the North Sea), in the midst of impassable marshes, are a nation terrible for their courage and activity, and highly formidable to the Roman power."<sup>3</sup> "It is a mere amusement, says Sidonius Apollinaris, for the pirate Saxon to cut through the British Sea in his pinnace of osier and skins."<sup>4</sup> And in fact the Saxons in these light skiffs, similar in materials to those described by Herodotus with regard to the Armenians, used to undertake very distant expeditions. They were known to have penetrated as far as the Columns of Hercules at the extremity of Spain, and Britain which lay foremost in their way naturally became the object of continual aggression. What was the precise situation of their own country is not very clear. The words of Orosius, just quoted, seem to show that they occupied the coast of Germany which extends

<sup>1</sup> Ammian. Marcellin. Hist. Lib. 26. apud Usserium.—Notit. Imper.—Collier.

<sup>2</sup> Dubos, tom. i. p. 75.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. 169.

<sup>4</sup> Sid. Apoll. Paneg. Aviti. See also Hegesippus Eccl. Hist. Lib. v. Pliny. Hist. Lib. iv. ch. 16. Lucan Pharsal. Lib. iv. *Cæsar*. Comment. Lib. 1. Bell. Civ. Herod. Clio. 194. ch.

between the Rhine and the Weser, known by the name of Friesland. And such is the opinion of a writer of those parts, Bernardus Furnerius, in his *Annals of the Frisian people*.<sup>1</sup>

While German and Lupus were in Britain, one of these plundering expeditions of the Saxons took place. They joined their forces to those of the Picts, the eternal enemies of the Britons, and made a descent upon the coasts of North Wales, in Flintshire. They chose a favourable spot for their attack, having rowed or towed their boats up the river Dee, and landed under the Welsh hills, near Mold. The Britons, who had assembled to oppose them, found themselves unable to cope with the peculiar tactics of their enemy, and were constrained to remain within their own entrenchments. The descriptions which have been left of the mode of attack practised by the Saxons, will best explain the reasons of their embarrassment.

In their light vessels, which they were careful to fill with expert and resolute men, the Saxons never used to lose sight of the land, if possible ; and indeed the nature of their boats required but little depth of water. When a storm came on, they took refuge in some creek, or beneath the cliffs on the coast. At the return of the fair weather, they again left their place of refuge, and directing their course from cape to cape, they stopped wherever any occasion of plunder offered. The want of our modern resources of artillery rendered all offensive measures against these invaders quite useless. It was a frequent custom with them, as in the present occasion, to navigate up the rivers which came in their way ; and sometimes they might have been found at

<sup>1</sup> Ed. 1609. *Franecaræ*.

the distance of fifty leagues from the sea, like the Normans in the ninth century, whose predatory fleets were seen in the Seine under the walls of Paris. When they had advanced so far into the land as to begin to lack depth of water, the men got ashore to lighten the boats which they towed along. A whole army of them thus used to descend upon those defenceless tracts of country where the vigilance of the Maritime Commanders had not prevented their progress. The chief means which were employed to resist them consisted in the use of a number of flat boats which the Roman Government had stationed in the rivers, and bridges thrown across the stream near the walls of cities to obstruct the passage of the enemy.<sup>1</sup> An extract from a letter of Sidonius Apollinaris will show how difficult it was to repel them, and will illustrate some characteristics of their manners as well as those of their allies the Picts and Scots. He writes thus to a friend :

“ I have been informed that you have given the signal of departure to your fleet, and are performing the parts of both sailor and soldier, wandering along the tortuous coasts of the sea in pursuit of those long curved skiffs of the Saxons.<sup>2</sup> Of course as many of them as you perceive at the oar, you may reckon to be so many arch-pirates ; for indeed all at once command, obey, instruct, and learn to plunder. I have great reason then in recommending precaution to you. These of all our enemies are the most fierce. They attack by surprise, and escape when discovered. They despise your preparations, and yet, if you do not take measures, they are instantly upon you. They never

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Dubos, p. 175 and 75.

<sup>2</sup> “ Pandos myoparones.”

pursue without success, never make away without impunity. Shipwrecks instead of alarming them, are a mere exercise. With the perils of the sea they are more than acquainted, they are familiar. If a tempest supervene, they know this, that their designed victims will be off their guard, and that they will escape notice out at sea. And in the midst of the waves and the rocks, there they play with danger, expecting shortly a successful descent. If, when about to set sail for their own country, they weigh anchor before their enemy's coast, they have this preliminary custom. Just before they start, they decimate their captives for cruel tortures, which are the more horrid from the superstition that dictates them. They think that chance which presides at the drawing of lots is of that equitable nature, that all the iniquity which might be imputed to such frightful slaughter is as a matter of course removed. And as if purified by these sacrifices, not rather polluted by the sacrilege, the perpetrators of this bloody deed make it a point of religion to prefer the death of their captives to any proffered ransom."

It was this last practice mentioned by Sidonius, which made probably Salvian some years before call the Saxons emphatically the savage Saxons.<sup>1</sup> It does not appear the Picts and Scots were less cruel under the similar influence of Paganism and superstition. The two Apostles of those nations, St. Palladius and St. Patrick, had not yet set out to convert them.

The combined forces of these nations were laying waste the country of Flintshire, and forcing the Britons who had assembled to oppose them, to remain within their entrenchments, when a deputation arrived in the

<sup>1</sup> "Ferus Saxon," De Gubern.

parts where German and Lupus were preaching, and requested them as a last resource to come to the assistance of the exposed army. They readily complied, and hastening their progress, soon arrived near Mold, in Flintshire, or as the Welsh call it, Guid-cruc, where they found the Britons collected. Their arrival infused at once joy and confidence into all hearts, as if holiness, we are told, had been in itself an equivalent to a large army. The two Prelates were then constituted Generals of the British Forces, one of the earliest instances in which ecclesiastical rulers are known to have taken the lead in military exploits.

It was now the season of Lent, that is, the spring of the year 430. The Britons were wont to observe the Forty Days with particular solemnity ; and the presence of German and Lupus now added to the strictness of their observance. Every day the two Bishops preached to the soldiers ; insomuch, says Constantius, that there was a general wish to receive the grace of Baptism ; and a great number were initiated into the Church at the river Alen which ran beside the camp.<sup>1</sup> By this we are to understand that there were as yet many Pagans in Britain, which the analogy of other countries would confirm, or that there were many persons, who, though professing the Christian religion, deferred their baptism till the last, according to a corrupt custom very prevalent in all Christendom, which was frequently reprobated from the pulpit, and of which Constantine the Great had been a striking example.<sup>2</sup> But this last cause, which has escaped the at-

<sup>1</sup> Alen is called Strat-Alen by the Welsh. See Camden.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. St. Chrys. ad Acta Apost. Hom. L, and Bingham, who has explained the various reasons of the practice.

tention of critics, need not be taken alone. Probably the Catechumens were a mixed number of both classes.

The Saturday night, called the Great Sabbath, and the following morning of Easter Day were the times appointed in the Church for Baptism ; and apparently were devoted to this purpose in the army of the Britons. On Easter Day, which this year fell on the 30th of March, a temporary Church was erected with the branches of trees, and adapted to the offices of religion like churches in towns.<sup>1</sup> Hither the people fresh from the waters of Baptism thronged to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord. While they were thus employed, the enemy who received intelligence of what was going on in the British army immediately seized the opportunity, and advanced towards the camp. Their march was announced just as the Solemnities of Easter were concluded. The neophyte army filled with extraordinary ardour prepared for battle. German acted the part of commander. With some light troops he proceeded to survey the country ; and found in the direction which the enemy would necessarily take, a valley surrounded with high hills. Here he posted the body of his army. Soon after the Saxons and the Picts arrived at the entrance of the valley, secure of victory, and unconscious of any ambuscade. Suddenly a loud shout of Alleluia resounded in the mountains, and Alleluia passed from hill to hill, gathering strength as it was re-echoed on all sides. Consternation filled them at once ; and as if the rocks were ready to fall and crush them, seized with a general panic they immediately took to flight, leaving their arms, baggage, and

<sup>1</sup> Tillemont xv. 18.

even clothes behind them. A large number perished in the river. The Britons who had remained motionless, and were by order of German the authors of the cry of Alleluia, now came forth to collect the spoils of a victory which all acknowledged the gift of Heaven. Thus says Constantius, did Faith obtain a triumph, without slaughter, with two Bishops for leaders. Thus might it be said with a modern writer, does the Church conquer. "Not by strength of arm, by a soldiery, implements of war, strong holds, silver and gold ; for of these she has none ; but by the visible tokens of a Divine ministry ; by the weapons of God."<sup>1</sup>

The memory of this battle is still preserved by the inhabitants of Flintshire ; and the place where the armies were situated, bears even now the name of Maes Garmon, or the Field of German. It is about a mile from Mold. A glance at the map will show that the mountainous nature of the country afforded both scope for an ambuscade and a convenient locality for the landing of the Barbarians. To this event, which goes in history by the name of the Alleluiatic Victory, Gregory the Great three hundred years after seems to have alluded, in his Commentary on the Book of Job : "The Faith of the Lord," he says, "has now found entrance into the hearts of almost all people ;<sup>2</sup> and has united in one bond the Eastern and Western regions Behold the tongue of the Briton, once wont to howl in barbarous sounds, has since learnt to resound the Hebrew Alleluia in praise to God. The ocean once so boisterous is become subservient to the will of Saints

<sup>1</sup> Sermons on Subjects of the Day, p. 274.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. apud Usserium, p. 333., and Alford, an. 429.

and its rage, which the arm of princes is unable to tame, is fettered by the simple word of God's Priests."

It may seem somewhat strange to the student that Gildas should not have made mention of this signal event, in his History of Britain, previous to the Saxon Conquest. In that work the name of St. German is not once mentioned. It may be answered that Gildas, in another work which, according to the earliest tradition, he was supposed to have written, did probably give a special notice of St. German and his deeds. Walfrid of Monmouth tells us that through St. German and St. Lupus, God manifested many miracles, *which Gildas in his Treatise had clearly set forth*. And we learn that besides his History and Epistle, Gildas wrote an account of the victory of Aurelius Ambrosius who lived about this time.<sup>1</sup> And though it may be said that the History of Nennius is often attributed to Gildas by early writers, yet we have no proof that this particular work was the same as the History which now is given to Nennius; besides which Nennius himself in many parts of his book may be looked upon as the Transcriber of Gildas. But furthermore in Gildas's acknowledged history, he is any thing but circumstantial, and he confesses himself that he wrote from foreign report, and not from the records of native writers,<sup>2</sup> adding that precision in that account was not always to be expected of him. And in truth much of his history is vague and applicable to any revolution caused by foes from without and dissensions within. Again Gildas was further removed from the times he describes than Constantius, and even sup-

<sup>1</sup> See Usher, 335 and 101.

<sup>2</sup> Transmarinâ relatione, p. 13.



posing he had nowhere commemorated St. German's great deeds, the contrary of which is more probable yet the confusion which the Saxon Conquest has thrown over the past, and the straits to which Gildas was exposed through emigration, might account for important omissions. But there is more than this, it is believed that in one of his indefinite descriptions of the state of the Britons he has expressly alluded to the Alleluiatic Victory, when he says, "Then for the first time the Britons obtained a victory over the enemies who for many years had occupied their land, *because they confided not in man but in God*, according to the saying of Philo : 'when human aid fails, one must have recourse to Divine assistance.' Then the daring enemies rested for a season ; but the corruption of the Britons afterward returned ; the public foes retired from the land, but not the nation from their crimes."

Now the great objection to this view is, that Gildas assigns the event in question to a time subsequent to the embassy of the Britons to Aetius, which took place in 446. Therefore, it may be said, it could not coincide with St. German's first mission, which we have assigned to 429, though it might if the chronology of Bede and others be preferred to that of Prosper. But without making this any ground for delaying St. German's first mission, for the authority of Gildas in this point would be next to none, still it is very conceivable that Gildas may have referred the victory against the barbarians to his second mission,<sup>1</sup> which in fact did take place after the embassy to Aetius, that is, in 447 or may altogether have confounded the two visits of the Saint to this Island, which is the more probable, &

<sup>1</sup> The learned Carte in a note inclines to this also, p. 182.

his imitator, Nennius, who is so full about St. German, does not seem to have been aware of them, and Gildas affords no trace of having been acquainted with Constantius's work ; both he and Nennius following authorities of their own. The learned moreover are agreed that the chronology and precision of Gildas are by no means to be pressed without examination. Yet as there is reason also to think he would not have mentioned a fact without foundation for it, the passage above quoted is conceived to be a real and distinct reference to the Alleluiatic Victory, which was so especially the gift of Heaven.

Lastly, if a conjecture may be hazarded, the very indistinctness in which Bede has involved his chronology of this period, may have arisen from the confusion of the two visits of St. German by Gildas, or at least by his having postponed the Alleluiatic Victory. Induced by Constantius, his chief authority on one hand, he preserved the connexion between the first overthrow of Pelagianism and the Victory, while on the other following Gildas as to the probable date of the latter, because Constantius had assigned none, he transferred the combined circumstances to the late epoch of 449.<sup>1</sup> And this may account in some measure for his seeming neglect of St. Prosper's authority, (if indeed he was acquainted with the copy of that writer's *Chronicon* which has here been considered genuine,) namely, that Gildas had referred the Alleluiatic Victory to a period about twenty years later than that to which St. Prosper assigns the first overthrow of Pelagianism, and Bede did not think himself justified in breaking the connexion which Constantius had observed, a connexion

<sup>1</sup> See *Epit. Eccl. Hist. et Sex Ætat. Mundi.*

which after all Constantius himself may (not possibly) have been misinformed in.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### *English Traditions.*

GERMAN and Lupus remained less than a year in Britain, but during that short time they rendered invaluable services to the people. There are many difficulties connected with this part of their history, as regards those facts which are not specified by Constantius. But it is manifest from numerous and circumstantial traditions that they effected a reform in many ways in the political constitution as well as in the Church. Those changes which relate to the former will be reserved for a subsequent consideration, since they properly belong to St. German's second visit to Britain, during which he was brought more directly into intercourse with king Vortigern. The following few traditions, out of many, will illustrate the ecclesiastical and moral improvements which are attributed to the sojourn of German and Lupus in this country.

"The two Bishops," says an ancient record of high authority, "after having extirpated the Pelagian heresy,<sup>1</sup> consecrated Bishops in many places, but chiefly among the Britons of the Eastern provinces (the Welsh.) Foremost among these was the blessed Dubricius, a doctor of great learning, whom they conse-

<sup>1</sup> Apud Usserium, 79, and Stillingfleet, 207.

rated Archbishop, as elected by the king and the whole diocese. When German had conferred this dignity upon him, they appointed him his Episcopal See, with the consent of Mouricus the king, the princes, the clergy and the people, at Landaff, and dedicated the place to St. Peter the Apostle."

From this centre issued many other distinguished Bishops. Daniel was made Bishop of Bangor, and Itutus Bishop of Llan Itut. The whole island in short was filled with the disciples of German.<sup>1</sup> Besides St. Dubricius, St. Itutus, we hear of St. Thelias, St. Sampson, St. Aidanus, St. David, St. Paulinus, St. Cadocus, surnamed Sophus, or the Wise, (who went to Rome and became Bishop of Beneventum in Italy, where he was murdered before the altar,) St. Briocus, since first Bishop of St. Brioux in Brittany, St. Patrick, St. German (called after St. German of Auxerre,) who went to Scotland, and others.<sup>2</sup>

Another tradition informs us that "when almost all the inhabitants of Cambridge (which Usher will not allow to be *the* Cambridge) had been endangered by the adversaries of God (the Pelagians,) Vortimer, the son of Vortigern, defended the students with a powerful hand. From their body, it is added, the holy doctors, German and Lupus, selected assistants to help them in expelling the heresy and other errors while they proclaimed the way of God in various parts of the kingdom. By God's aid they came to Caer Leon in Glamorganshire, where they not only taught the Sacred scriptures, but also instructed the youth in other liberal sciences, wherein reason is the guide and nature the

<sup>1</sup> Collier, tom. i. p. 111. Alford an. 437.

<sup>2</sup> Bosch. Comm. Præv. vii. Bolland. Usher 339.

study. And thus some became profound in astronomy and other learning, and were able to observe the course of the stars with success ; others foretold prodigies which were to occur about that time among the Britons while others despising the world and its enjoyment from love of a heavenly life cleaving to God alone turned their devout thoughts to the contemplation of Holy Scripture and to Prayer ; among whom were Tremerinus, Dubricius, Theonotus, Eldadus, David Swithunus, Dumianus, who laboured with constancy and proficiency in the exposition of the Scriptures."

Such accounts, while they illustrate the great activity of German and Lupus, are also the foundation somewhat uncertain of the antiquity claimed for the university of Cambridge. There may be some partiality in preferring the claims of Oxford as better supported but it is rather with a view to show the far spreading influence of our Saints' fame, that the following interesting circumstances are here produced.

"In 886, A. D., we are told, a fierce contention arose in Oxford between Grymbald with the learned men he brought with him and the old students whom he found in that city. These last refused altogether to admit the laws, forms and usages, which Grymbald introduced into the Public Lectures. For the three first years the open dissension was but small, and animosity remained concealed. But afterwards it broke out with great fury. To appease the disturbance, Alfred, that invincible king, says the record, having through Grymbald made himself acquainted with the causes, came to Oxford to put an end to the controversy. Here he underwent much labour in hearing and judging the dispute of the parties. The sum of their quarrel was as follows *The old students affirmed that before Grymbald came*

to Oxford, letters had been in a flourishing condition there ; although the numbers of the students had diminished of late from the tyranny of the Pagan conquerors. Moreover they clearly proved by the authority of the Ancient Annals, that the statutes and regulations had been established by men of great piety and learning, such as St. Gildas, Melkinus, Nennius, Kentigern and others, who all grew old in Oxford in the study of letters, and governed with peace and concord. Furthermore that St. German also had come to Oxford and spent half a year there, at the time when he travelled through Britain to oppose the Pelagians ; and he expressed, they affirmed, his admiration distinctly for the statutes of the place. King Alfred having heard both sides, (we do not learn what the opposite school urged in their favour), exerted his authority in recommending unanimity. He then departed, charging them to follow each their respective customs with mutual forbearance. But Grymbald highly displeased at this arbitration, immediately left Oxford for the Monastery of Winchester, which Alfred had recently founded. Afterwards he caused his remains to be buried in the vaults of the Church of St. Peter at Oxford, which Grymbald had erected from the very foundations with *carefully polished stone*."

Without pronouncing upon the authenticity of such evidence, which Camden is more disposed to receive than Usher, there is one circumstance relating to the subject-matter which has not often been noticed, and yet is of some importance. In every large town, it has already been remarked, public schools had been established by the Roman government ; and, after the pattern of Gaul and other provinces of the empire, Professors of Letters, Science, and Philosophy, were main-

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tained at the public expense. If, then, Oxford and Cambridge existed in these early times, as chief towns, (and it is probable they did) they would, as a matter of course, have had their schools and literary appointments. The question then is, whether they were destroyed by the Saxon invaders and only restored at a later period, or whether, amid the general havoc occasioned by the invasion, they alone survived, and transmitted their learning and statutes to future generations. Until this matter be settled, it is useless to seek for Universities in Roman times, for all great towns then were privileged with them. The doubt is, whether the connexion remained unbroken, for which the above evidence in favour of Oxford, seems to be in point. *Sed videbunt alii.*

On the whole, says Carte, there is no room to doubt of the institution of schools of learning by St. German, which are attested by many ancient writers, and universally admitted by the learned critics and antiquarians of later ages.<sup>1</sup>

But to advert, lastly, to another class of services which German and Lupus are said to have rendered to Britain, a document of the seventh century asserts that they introduced the Gallican Liturgy into the British Church. "The Blessed Cassian" it says, "who lived in the Monastery of Lerins with the blessed Honoratus, and afterwards Honoratus the first Abbot, and St. Cesarius, Bishop of Arles, and St. Porcarius, Abbot also of Lerins, observed this Liturgical Use (the Gallican.) And in the same monastery with them were the blessed German and Lupus as monks, and they also followed the same Rule and the same Use in divine

<sup>1</sup> T. i. p. 182.

service. They, in process of time, obtained the dignity due to their sanctity, and subsequently, in Britain and in the regions of the Scots, came and taught, as we read in the lives of the two Saints."

This statement, of course, is faulty in many respects. We do not hear of Cassian having lived at Lerins. St. Victor, at Marseilles, was his monastery. Though St. Lupus was monk at Lerins, St. German is nowhere else said to have resided there, and the circumstances of his life would not well admit of it. The main information, however, which the author intended to convey, namely, that German and Lupus introduced the Liturgical Use of Gaul into Britain, may nevertheless be authentic. The Public Service of the Church at that time was not so universally settled as to make this introduction an irregularity, even supposing there were no adequate sanction for it. Nor is this the place to draw invidious distinctions between the Roman and the Gallican Liturgy, as Stillingfleet and Collier are pleased to do ;<sup>1</sup> we must beware of carrying modern prejudices and controversies into the study of the ancients, just as (to borrow an illustration from a recent writer) we may not seek Calvinism in St. Augustine, or Arminianism in St. Chrysostom.

<sup>1</sup> Still. Orig. 221. Collier i. 112.



## CHAPTER XVI.

*St. German's Return to Gaul.*

THE two Bishops, having accomplished the object of their journey, by suppressing the heresy of the Pelagians, and done other great deeds for the Britons, after the lapse of about a year, embarked again for Gaul, amid the acclamations of an immense multitude assembled to see them off. They carried with them the sacred dust from St. Alban's tomb, and arrived safe at the opposite coast. They afterwards parted company, and returned to their respective Sees.

St. Lupus, of whom we must now take a final leave, governed the Church of Troyes for many years, during which he saved that city from the fury of Attila, king of the Huns, and distinguished himself by his learning, wisdom, and heroic sanctity. Notwithstanding a life of excessive austerity, he protracted his existence to the great age of ninety-six, and died in 479, in the fifty-second year of his Episcopate, about twenty years after the death of his old companion German. This is one of those instances, among many others, which made Lord Bacon wonder that the ancient Saints, with their rigid asceticism, should have lived so long.

St. German was accompanied on his return by one of his new disciples, St. Briocus, before mentioned. St. Briocus was a Briton of a noble family. St. German instructed him in the science of holiness, and *Briocus* greatly profited by his precepts. After he had

drunk deep, says history, at the fountains of sound doctrine, he returned from Gaul to his country ; and there taught his parents the true faith, and went about preaching everywhere. Being desirous, however, of improving more abundantly the talent of the Lord, he retired to Armorica, or Brittany, in Gaul. Here he effected the conversion of Count Conan, and baptized him. Then collecting some persons anxious to lead a religious life, he erected a Monastery at St. Brieux, so called after himself, on the foundations granted by Conan. He then received the Episcopal consecration, from the Metropolitan of Tours, and presided over his diocese with great honour for nearly thirty years. Finally, having gone to Angers on ecclesiastical business, he there breathed his last.<sup>1</sup> St. Briocus may be taken as a specimen of St. German's missionary success.

<sup>1</sup> Usher 997. Alford an. 437.

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*Rest of this book is  
in Volume 11-12x*

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1. d. 7. i

# ERRATA.

Page 61, lines 25 and 30, for Marмонтier read Marmontier.

v. 10

LIVES  
OF  
THE ENGLISH SAINTS.

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Stephen Langton,  
ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

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v. 10

MANSUETI HEREDITABUNT TERRAM, ET DELECTABUNTUR IN  
MULTITUDINE PACIS.

LONDON:  
JAMES TOOVEY, 192, PICCADILLY.

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1845.



LONDON :  
Printed by S. & J. BENTLEY, WILSON, and FLEY,  
Bangor House, Shoe Lane.

THE LIFE OF

Stephen Langton.

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CHAPTER I.

THE following pages differ from the preceding numbers of the series, in being almost entirely occupied with the public history of the period. They are not so much a biography of Langton, as a history of the struggle of King John against the Holy See—a contest which ushered in the thirteenth century, and forms the whole history of the reign of that King. Little is often known of the personal history of great Saints. And this is not surprising of men whose “life is hid with Christ in God.” But it is matter of wonder, that so little should be on record concerning that great prelate, who, during a twenty-three years’ occupation of the see of Canterbury, acted in public a more prominent part in national affairs, and in the cloister produced more works for the instruction of his flock, than any who, before or since him, have been seated in that “Papal chair of the North,”—who was the soul of that powerful confederacy who took the crown from the head of the *successor* of the Conqueror,—and yet, next to *Bede*, the most voluminous and original commentator

on the Scriptures this country has produced—and who has transmitted to us an enduring memorial of himself, in three most different institutions, which, after the lapse of six centuries, are still in force and value among us—Magna Charta,—the division of the Bible into chapters,—and those constitutions which open the series, and form the basis, of that Canon Law, which is still binding in our Ecclesiastical Courts.

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STEPHEN, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1206—1229, is known by the surname of Langton, from the place of his birth, Langton, near Spilsby, in Lincolnshire. His family, though not illustrious, was sufficiently well known to be appealed to afterwards, in proof of his loyalty to the king.<sup>1</sup>

The persecution and vexation the Church suffered under Henry II., and the consequent insecurity of study, had almost annihilated in England learning, or the means of acquiring it. Oxford and the other English schools were forsaken, and English students spread themselves over Europe in search of that instruction which their own country no longer supplied. But of all the foreign schools, none had such attractions at this period as the rising university of Paris. Bologna might be celebrated for its professors of the new and popular study of canon law; Toledo<sup>2</sup> had caught, from the proximity of the Arabians, some of their love for mathematical science; but the best instruction in all the various branches might be found gathered into one

<sup>1</sup> “In terrâ tuâ natus de parentibus tibi fidelibus et devotis.”  
*Epist. Inn.* iii. ad Joan.

<sup>2</sup> A. Wood. *Hist. Un. Ox.* p. 56.

focus in the bosom of this "Instructress of the World."<sup>3</sup> There no art or science was neglected ; but above all in theology, to which arts were but introductory, it was already illustrated by doctors whose fame was maintained in the Sorbonne even to the Revolution. Important cases of conscience were referred to them, as points of law were to the canonists of Bologna. Henry II. offered to submit the question between himself and S. Thomas to the scholars.<sup>4</sup> Popes consulted them ; and the highest praise that could be given to an expounder of doctrine was, "One would suppose he had spent his life at Paris !" <sup>5</sup> It was liberally encouraged by two successive sovereigns, Lewis VII. and Philip II. Thus a concourse of students from all parts of Christendom was drawn together there, such as perhaps was never, before or since, collected in one place for a similar purpose. Hungary and Poland, Sweden and Denmark, countries then almost outside the European world, sent their youth there ; and, from specimens contained within the precincts of the university, a contemporary depicts the character of almost all the nations of Europe.<sup>6</sup>

The distinction which Stephen Langton attained as a teacher, both in the new philosophy of the schools and in the exposition of Scripture, first drew on him the discerning eye of Innocent III. Innocent had himself studied at Paris ; but, having quitted it before 1185,<sup>7</sup> could hardly have been personally acquainted with Stephen. But Innocent ever watched most sedulously over

<sup>3</sup> "Doctrix totius orbis." Rigord.

<sup>4</sup> Rad. de Dicet. ap. Bul. ii. 262.

<sup>5</sup> Hurter Geschichte. Inn. iii., vol. i. 13.

<sup>6</sup> *Jacobus a Vitriaco*, Hist. Occ. 279.

<sup>7</sup> *Du Theil*. Vie de Rob. de Courcon.



the place of his early education ; and Langton was one of that class whom it was his object through his long pontificate to draw round him from every part of the Church,—men well trained in school theology without being mere students, and fit for active life without being secularized in principle ; and few men, as we shall see in the sequel, have united in a higher degree than Langton deep theology with practical talent.

That he taught in the university first the liberal arts, and afterwards theology, and that he became a canon of the cathedral church of Notre Dame, is, with one exception, all that is known of his history previous to his going to Rome. That exception is his connection with Fulk of Neuilly, the reformer of the university of Paris ; and it will be necessary to say something more of it.

It will not be supposed that there were not drawbacks to a state of things in itself so admirable as that of the university ; evils which arose from the very zeal of learning and throng of votaries. Its position in the centre (Philip Augustus's wall was begun in 1190) of the richest and most highly civilized capital of Europe, exposed the youth to the usual moral dangers of great cities. And the academicians here were not lodged, as in Oxford, apart in halls or hospitia, but in the houses of the citizens ; and, according to the (somewhat rhetorical, however) description of one who had himself been educated there,<sup>8</sup> in one and the same tenement the business of the schools might be going on in an upper story, while beneath, on the ground floor, were the haunts of vice. Abundance, too, tempted to excess and debauch, and plunged the impatient and tumultuous youth into those serious frays with the townspeople, or between

<sup>8</sup> Jacob. a Vitru.

jealous “nations,” of which we hear from the very first origin of universities.<sup>9</sup>

But the teacher also had his danger. Love of lucre seduced the more sordid to coin their skill or reputation into gold. Many, again, capable of thoughts above this world, were assailed by the enemy of souls by other arts, to which some of the most illustrious fell a prey. No period of the Christian world has witnessed a greater ferment of intellect, more eager zeal in the pursuit of knowledge, more ardour of scientific inquiry, than did the commencement of the scholastic age. As to the *material* of knowledge, the recovery of the Roman Law, the Græco-Arabian natural history and medicine, and the fresh streams of every sort poured in from the East, opened new fields of attainment, which made the narrow limits of the old Trivium and Quadrivium seem contemptible.<sup>1</sup> And as to the intellectual spirit, a new instrument of philosophical speculation was put into their hands by the Aristotelian logic, capable of application to every subject matter. It seemed for some time doubtful whether, as was the case in the next crisis of thought, three centuries later, this intellectual movement would not carry those who shared in it beyond the definitions of the Faith, and the limits of the Church; and her final and complete victory, by which she enlisted heathen wisdom in her service, was not secured before many, like Arnold of Brescia, had been swept beyond her saving ark into the sea of error. The danger of speculation outstripping the expansion of heavenly verities God averted from his Church by the instrumentality of S. Bernard, and the great school doctors who followed him, as is well known. But the same

<sup>9</sup> *Hurt. i. 16.*

<sup>1</sup> See Huber on Univ. ch. i.

cause which threatened the Church at large introduced a practical evil into each one of the seats of learning. Indeed, the universities through their whole history, though externally part of the Church system, legislated for by councils, and under the especial patronage of popes, never seem thoroughly incorporated into the Church. They wear an Arabian aspect, or remind us of Athens or Alexandria, the Sophists, and the Neoplatonists. They found their most genial soil in Spain, where, at an early period, elegant literature and profound science reached, in the Hebrew and Moslem universities, a degree of development which those of Christendom only attained within the last three centuries. For the first time in the Christian world, men saw an education, professing to train the intellect, disregarding the discipline of the soul. The highest exercise of the human mind is the contemplation of verities, in which the whole affections of the heart are constantly absorbed. The object of the cloister is to form men to this, the really philosophical mind. The logical, active intellect, which is ever seeking to give reasons for a faith which, during its efforts, is eluding its view, is that which the university tended to foster. Hence the contrast between the old monastic and cathedral schools and the new universities,—hence the struggles in the bosom of the university of Paris between the Dominicans and the secular regents, which fill its annals during the thirteenth century. It is true that S. Thomas subdued even the schools to the obedience of Christ, and made Aristotle, like the toiling genius of Arabian fable, the reluctant slave of a master of another and higher race. But, though philosophy and faith were thus reconciled in the *abstract*, the universities in practice remained on the *world's side*. They might teach the *Summa*, but they

sided with Henry VIII. Not only many of the heresies of the thirteenth century sprang directly from them, but, what is more, the whole heretical temper throughout found in them its support and home. A feeling of this evil tendency dictated the founding of the college of the Sorbonne, from which all study save that of theology was to be excluded. "To what end," said its founder, Robert, "serve Priscian, Justinian, Gratian, and Aristotle?" And the whole feeling of religious men in the thirteenth century towards the scholastic philosophy—forced to tolerate it, but watching it with a jealous eye,—was exactly what had been expressed in earlier times towards heathen literature by S. Jerome and S. Gregory.<sup>2</sup>

And accordingly in Paris at this time, all the evil attendant on a disproportionate development of the intellect was rife in the university. Self-reliance and independence of mind, the pride of science, which forgets God,—the conceit of attainments and vanity of display, which contemns men,—with the meaner passions of jealousy, envy, and detraction, were evils most prominent.<sup>3</sup> To combat and correct this intellectual pride, Divine Providence was pleased to make use of the preaching of a humble and unlettered country priest.

"In those days the God of heaven stirred up the spirit of a certain country priest, a simple man, and untaught, Fulk by name, and curate of Neuilly, near Paris. For, as of old he chose fishermen and unlearned, that that glory which was his own might not be given to another; so now, when his little ones were asking bread, but the learned, intent on vain wranglings and

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Hieron. ad Eustoch. i. 51.

<sup>3</sup> *Sibi invidabant, scholares aliorum blanditiis attrahebant, gloriam propriam quærentes.* Jacob. & Vitr.

disputes of words, cared not to break it for them, the Lord made choice of this priest, like a star beaming through a mist, a shower in a long drought, like another Shamgar, to slay many with the ploughshare of skill-less preaching." This man, feeling shame for his ignorance of holy Scripture, determined, old as he was, to do what he could to remedy this defect ; so he began to go regularly into the city to attend the lectures in theology. He frequented the celebrated Peter the Chanter, "of whom, as of a spring of most pure water, the above-mentioned Fulk sought to drink ; so, entering in humble sort the school with his note-book and pen, he carried away some few trite maxims and practical, such as his capacity served him to gather from the mouth of the lecturer. He would oft ponder on them, and commit them firmly to memory : and on the festivals, returning to his parish, he carefully dispensed to his flock what he had thus industriously gathered. And now at first, on the invitation of priests, his neighbours, he began in fear and modesty to deliver in the vulgar tongue to simple lay folk the words he had heard, like another Amos, "a herdsman, and gatherer of sycamore fruit."<sup>4</sup> His discerning master, noting his poor and illiterate pupil's zeal and fervour, and embracing with the bowels of love his faith and devotion, compelled him to preach before himself and divers learned scholars at Paris, in the church of St. Severin. And the Lord gave to his new knight so great grace and power, that both his master and the rest also testified that the Holy Spirit spake in and through him and thenceforward others, teachers and learners alike began to flock to his rude and simple preaching. On

<sup>4</sup> Amos, vii. 14.

invited another, saying, Come and hear the priest Fulk, who is another Paul.

“On a day when a vast concourse, both clergy and the common folk, were gathered to him in a great square of the city, called Champel, the Lord opened their understandings to understand the Scriptures; and the Lord gave such grace to his word, that many, touched, yea pierced to the heart, presented themselves before him stripped and unsandalled, bearing in their hands rods or thongs, and, confessing their sins before all, submitted themselves to his will and guidance. . . . Such power did the Lord add to his words, that the masters of the university and the scholars, now changing places, brought note-books to his preaching, and took down his words out of his mouth.”<sup>5</sup> Another contemporary adds, “The masters he exhorted to give pithy, wholesome, and profitable lectures, in the fear of the Lord; the logicians also he admonished to put away what profited not, and to retain in their art only what was of good fruit; the decretists he reprovèd for their long and wearisome harmonies of cases; the theologians for their tediousness and subtleties; and so the teachers of the other arts in like manner he rebuked, and calling them off from what was vain and profitless, brought them to teach and handle things necessary.”<sup>6</sup>

Such was the agent in this commotion of spirits that agitated the university in the last years of the twelfth century, a prelude to the greater reformation wrought not long after by Reginald and the Dominican preachers: all of them instruments in God’s hand to save souls from the perils of study; to remind the

<sup>5</sup> *Jacob. a Vit. Hist. Occ.* p. 281.

<sup>6</sup> *Otho de S. Blasio.* c. 47.

scholar that the wisdom of the wise and the understanding of the prudent are foolishness in God's sight. And among others who joined themselves to Fulk were the two celebrated Englishmen, Robert de Courcon and Stephen Langton, both of them at different times called by Innocent to Rome, and advanced to the dignity of cardinal.

This was Langton's position at Paris. And when it is added, that he was made a prebend of York, afterwards of Notre Dame, and in 1206 promoted by Innocent to be Cardinal Priest of S. Chrysogonus, all has been told that is now known of him, previous to his election to Canterbury.<sup>7</sup> To see how this came to be, we must now turn our eyes to England — England under John.

<sup>7</sup> Note (b) at the end.

## CHAPTER II.

THE Church and King of those days seem antagonist notions. One can hardly tell how the Catholic Church and a Norman or Plantagenet sovereign coexisted in the same society. Their mutual tendency was to destroy each other. The balance was preserved by an alternation of success. The Church protested, entreated, submitted, secularized herself; would seem for a while identified with the world, and the King was pleased: but the more she yielded, the more he exacted, till some vital point was touched; then a persecution — and a confessor or a martyr was raised up, and the spiritual fire was again kindled, and the lost ground regained. The war which pagan powers had waged against Apostolic doctrine, feudal powers continued against Apostolic polity. England's only martyr from the Conquest to the Reformation fell in that cause, which is the one subject of English church history, the independence of the Spiritual power.

The contrast is heightened by the personal character of these sovereigns. In the annals of all Christian nations we read of no such dynasty of tyrants, unless perhaps the early Merovingian princes. Violence, rapine, cruelty, and lust were their habitual daily occupation. Every passion uncurbed, every foul vice that pollutes humanity was to be found with them. *Plucking out eyes, lopping off the hands and feet, were their pastime. Tall of stature, and of great strength, the*



truculent and bloodshot eye speaking the habitual excess that fed the corpulent and bloated frame, the king might seem some beast of prey roaming at large, working his will among men, a living embodiment of the principle of evil. The taunt of the King of France on the Conqueror's huge size is well known. At his burial the grave was too narrow, and the corpse burst in the attempt to thrust it in. When Baldwin of Flanders refused him his daughter Matilda, William forced his way into the chamber of the princess, took her by the hair, dragged her to the door, and trampled her under his feet. Rufus's debaucheries are not to be even mentioned, and could not be practised but in the darkness of night; for it is told, with approbation, of Henry I., that he restored the use of lights in the court. Henry I. and John brought on their deaths by acts of voracious gluttony. It needed little stretch of imagination in the romance writer to fancy Richard feeding with glee on a Saracen's skull.

“ An hot head bring me beforn,  
Eat thereof fast I shall  
As it were a tender chick.”

Ever since their first settlement in Gaul the most part of the Norman dukes had been bastards.<sup>8</sup>

And there was this aggravation in the case, that our kings were not like the early Roman emperors, shut up in their palaces, surrounded and restrained by the etiquette of a civilized court; the frenzied debauchery of Commodus, or Caligula, or the more refined voluptuousness of Nero, was their occupation, engrossed their thoughts and energies.<sup>9</sup> The Norman king was actual

<sup>8</sup> See Michelet. Hist. de France, vol. iii. 55.

<sup>9</sup> “ It had been in the worst of times the consolation of t

as well as nominal sovereign of his realm ; his own minister, all matters, all persons came under his eye ; his tyranny was exercised not towards the slaves and minions of a palace, but towards the worthiest of his people ; his sensual notions and brutal passions were directed upon the highest interests of policy or of religion. They were all great men, and fought for great matters — wickedness in a truly royal shape.

At the accession of John (1199) the State was predominant. The invigorating effect of the blood of the blessed martyr S. Thomas was passing away. Every success contains the seeds of its own ruin. So noble an example of resisting unto blood for the sake of things unseen, had renovated the spiritual sense of the clergy ; and the sacrilegious murder, by the shock it gave men's minds, arrested them forcibly on the point for which the resistance had been made. But no sooner had revived virtue in the priests, and quickened sympathy in the people, wrought their natural effect—that of giving peace and honour to the Church, than its decline began ; the clergy returned to their secular lives, the king to his oppressions.

In no particular was this oppression more practically felt than in the choice of bishops. The *regale* worked badly here. It was not less an infraction of the Church's rights under wise and religious monarchs, but it was less felt then. The disease insinuated itself under an Edward the Confessor, and developed its virus under a Rufus. The Pope could not have made better bishops than the Conqueror. "Only strive to attain perfection," said Charlemagne to his clergy, "and I will give you

Romans, that the virtue of the emperors was active, and their vice indolent." Gibbon, chap. vi.

most magnificent bishoprics and monasteries.”<sup>1</sup> But now religious men were quite passed by, under the plausible pretext of their unfitness for business, and the most noisy, pushing intriguer among the king’s clerks was preferred. Richard selected for qualifications still less ecclesiastical. When he had to fill up the see of Canterbury while absent on the crusade, he cast his eye on Hubert Walter, bishop of Salisbury. “Hubert was very gracious in the eyes of all the host that lay before Acre, and in warlike things so magnificent, that he was admired even by King Richard. He was in stature tall, in council prudent, and though not having the gift of eloquence, he was of an able and shrewd wit. His mind was more on human than on Divine things, and he knew all the laws of the realm. So that he, with Ralph de Glanville, might be said to rule the kingdom, for Ralph used his counsel in all things.”<sup>2</sup> His essays in school-learning afforded some amusement at Rome. Giraldus, the satirical arch-deacon of St. David’s, makes the Pope (Celestine) say, “Now let us talk of your archbishop’s grammar-learning, how he preached in the synod, and how on Palm Sunday he distinguished the persons in the Trinity.”<sup>3</sup> He adds: “He was indeed a man of a notable activity and spirit, but forasmuch as he was neither gifted with a knowledge of letters, nor endued (I doubt) with the grace of lively religion, so neither in his days did the Church of England breathe again from the yoke of bondage.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ad perfectum attingere studete, et dabo vobis Episcopia et Monasteria permagnifica.—Chron. S. Gall.

<sup>2</sup> Gervas. 1679.

<sup>3</sup> Girald. ap. Dart. Hist. Canterbury.

<sup>4</sup> Giraldus, indeed, retracted in his later years some of the hard things he had said of the archbishop; but his general account is fully borne out by Gervase, who is not unfavourable to him.

Almost one of Innocent's first acts had been to require Hubert to resign the office of High Justiciary which he had held together with his see. But this could but palliate the evil ; it required to be met by stronger and more searching remedies : and an opportunity soon offered. Hubert Walter died in July 1205, to the great relief of the king (John). For, worldly and little scrupulous as this prelate was, his character was so energetic, and his influence and authority so great, that they constituted a check which John could not brook. The acquaintance with state affairs which he had gained as chief administrator during Richard's captivity, and the obligation he had laid John under, as having been the chief means of getting him the crown, contributed to render him independent. No man was more thoroughly aware of the false position which the metropolitan occupied, and his dereliction of his real duty, than that very temporal master himself, to whose service he sacrificed his duty towards his Heavenly Master. "So much for him!" he exclaimed, with a savage laugh, when told of the death of Fitz-Peter, the Justiciary, "the first person he will meet in hell will be my Chancellor, Hubert."

He died at Teynham, in Kent, and immediately on the news reaching Canterbury, before the body was buried, a part of the chapter made a bold and hazardous attempt to vindicate their freedom. The chapter of the cathedral church of Canterbury was composed, it will be remembered, of a prior and one hundred and fifty Benedictine monks. This had been one of Lanfranc's greatest reforms. He had suppressed the Saxon secular canons, and introduced the monastic rule. Such a change was then the greatest benefit that could be conferred on a diocese. They had no abbot ; the archbishop representing the abbot externally, though the internal govern-

ment of the monastery rested with the prior. A party among the monks, chiefly consisting of the younger brethren, held a meeting in the church in the middle of the night, and elected their sub-prior, Reginald, with the usual formalities of chanting the "Te Deum," and placing him first on the main altar, and then on the metropolitan throne. Their haste and secrecy was not with a view to forestal the king, but the suffragan bishops, who never failed on such occasions to put forward their claim. Conscious that their act was irregular, they saw that their only chance was to get a confirmation from the Holy See. They sent off Reginald the same night to Rome, accompanied by several of the monks. He carried letters of ratification under the common seal of the convent, which they had found means to procure, but had taken an oath not to use them, or to conduct himself as archbishop elect without special licence and letters from the convent. But no sooner had he landed in Flanders, than, disregarding his oath, he announced himself publicly as the elect of Canterbury, on his road to Rome for confirmation. He even openly exhibited the letters of election whenever he thought it would serve his cause to do so. He pursued the same conduct on his arrival at Rome, and, as though there had been no hindrance or objection, he demanded immediate confirmation. Something, however, led the court of Rome to suspect irregularity, and confirmation was suspended till further information should arrive from England.

The first person to present himself at Rome was an envoy of the suffragans, maintaining that an election at which they had not assisted was null and void. To put *an end*, once for all, to a dispute which was renewed on *the death* of every archbishop, it was resolved that it

question should be now solemnly tried and adjudicated. To give ample time for examining witnesses and collecting evidence, the month of May following was appointed for the sentence.

Meanwhile the news of Reginald's faithless conduct had excited the liveliest indignation among his supporters in the convent of Christ Church. Both parties accordingly agreed to proceed more regularly to a new election, and sent in haste to John for his permission to elect. This was in fact allowing the king to nominate; for the form of permission was always accompanied by a recommendation, which electors very rarely, and under pressing circumstances only, ever dared to disregard. The king's choice was John de Gray, Bishop of Norwich (1200—1214), a courtier and a politician, of useful, rather than splendid talent, and thoroughly pliant to the king's will. The elder and safer party in the convent had by this time recovered their ascendancy; the younger champions of independence were alarmed at their own boldness, and were glad to shelter themselves in silence. The king's mandate was received with obsequious respect, and a ready and even joyful acceptance was affected of a prelate whose character they must have viewed with contempt. He was in the North at the time, engaged on the king's business. On the receipt of the news he hastened to Canterbury, and on the 2nd of December the king himself came there, caused him to be enthroned, and invested with the temporalities.

The convent at home having been thus frightened into submission, it was only necessary to defeat the representations which Reginald and his party might make at Rome. The king kept his Christmas court at Oxford, and from thence despatched a monk of Canterbury, by name *Elias de Brantfield*, with five companions,

to Rome, furnishing them not only with the expenses of the journey, but also, it was said, with a large sum (eleven thousand marks<sup>1</sup>) to obtain from the Holy See the confirmation of the Bishop of Norwich. But though a body of helpless monks—even so intractable a body as the Christ Church Benedictines sometimes shewed themselves—shrunk before the king's frown, and would willingly have recalled their act; it was now too late, the matter had got beyond their hands. Reginald's election, though irregular, was a fact, and was in court, and so must be disposed of one way or other before any further valid step could be taken in the business.

But the whole of this year was occupied in taking evidence in England on the preliminary dispute between the convent and the suffragans. All this care was used that the point might be set at rest for ever, for it was simple enough in itself. On the 21st of December the court gave its sentence. The suffragans shewed that on three different occasions they had shared in the election of metropolitan. On the other hand, the chapter proved that from remote times the convent had been used to elect, in their own chapter, without the presence of the bishops, and that elections so made had been confirmed. And custom had been ratified by a papal bull which was produced. A definitive sentence was accordingly given, affirming the exclusive privilege of the prior and convent to elect the metropolitan, and forbidding the bishops to make any attempt in future to interfere.

But another and very distinct suit was now to come on—that between the two prelates elect. The case of John de Gray was easily disposed of. While a cause was pending before any court of law, no act which an-

<sup>1</sup> *Gesta Innocent.*

ticipated that court's sentence was legal. His election, therefore, which took place before the first was annulled, was *ipso facto* null and void. The court was now approaching ground which might involve it with the king of England, and it was necessary to proceed with the utmost circumspection. It was foreseen on both sides that Reginald's election must be annulled when it should come to be tried; and whilst the king's party proposed to take advantage of this to re-elect John de Gray, Innocent saw in it an opportunity for extricating the English Church from the yoke of royal nominations.

In the first ages of the Church the bishop was chosen by the voices of the whole of the flock which he was to govern, laity as well as clergy, under the advice and superintendence of the bishops of the province, or the neighbourhood. S. Cyprian directs,<sup>2</sup> "Take heed that ye observe the Divine traditions and Apostolic usage for the orderly holding of elections.<sup>3</sup> Let the neighbouring bishops of the province assemble to that flock over whom the bishop is to be ordained, and let the bishop be chosen in the presence of the people, which most fully knows each one's manner of life, and is witness of his whole conduct and behaviour." After Constantine, the emperors often interfered in disputed cases; and in the West, from the time of Charlemagne it became an established maxim of the canon law, that no election was valid to which the prince did not give his consent.

Three principal causes may be assigned which seemed to have obliged the Church to submit to this innovation in her practice. 1. The maxim of law, that the right of patronage followed endowment, which was admitted

<sup>2</sup> Ep. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Ordinatio, as *χειροτονία* in the Apost. Can. includes election and ordination.



to encourage private persons to give their property to parish churches, might seem equitably to require to be extended to cathedral churches, which were generally endowed by princes. 2. When ecclesiastical censures were allowed to carry temporal penalties, and spiritual sentences were enforced by the hand of power, the bishop became, so far, a state officer. 3. Under Charlemagne, and in the feudal system, endowments were given by the prince and accepted by the bishop as benefices, property requiring service; and this relation to the king would naturally come to seem to him closer and more binding than the relation of the bishop to his particular flock.

But the utmost extent of interference which the canons approved was a negative one; it made the royal consent necessary to an election independently made. It is needless to say how often this consent was in practice converted into an appointment; but the Church's right to free election was still maintained, even when wholly resigned in fact; the term "canonical election" so often occurring, meaning, as nearly as we can define it, election by the clergy of the Church, in the presence of the people, with the approbation of the bishops of the province, subject to the king's consent. The language of councils is various; sometimes absolutely asserting independence, sometimes absolutely resigning it, and condemning sometimes the prince who gave, sometimes the priest who sought, such appointments. Even in special grants of free election which were sometimes made, care is taken to insert a clause that the king gave the privilege, not as bestowing any new favour, but as chief defender of the Church's liberties.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The evidence on both sides is collected by Gratian (*Distinct. lxiii.*), who sums up the result much as is stated in the text.

The Conquest made little change in this respect. If we examine such notices as remain of the elections of the ten Norman archbishops who preceded Langton, we shall find that the monks, though they had to contend against the suffragans as well as the king, never failed to claim, often to put in force, their right to election; and even when finally accepting the king's nominee, they proceeded to a fresh election of him in their own chapter. So that a chapter which should seize a favourable opportunity, while the king was absent, or otherwise occupied, of electing a prelate by themselves and should get him confirmed, would, in so doing, be acting perfectly according to law; while on the other hand, the king might, with some colour of justice, complain that such a step was an invasion of a customary prerogative. And this was exactly what fell out in the present instance.

Like all other important causes, this one passed through the searching process and cautious procedure which gave so high a character to the judgments of the court of Rome, and that not least during the time that the presiding judge was one so deeply versed in canon law as Innocent III. That neither the king nor the king's party in the convent might have it in their power to object afterwards that the election had been made without their participation, he summoned both of them to send to Rome envoys with full powers. During the interval, the bishop of Rochester and the abbot of S. Augustine's were to examine all the religious of Christ Church on oath, as to the manner in which the late double election had been conducted. A new deputation of fifteen monks<sup>5</sup> appeared at Rome, entrusted with full

<sup>5</sup> *Quindecim. Gesta. duodecim. Paris.*

powers over their society in regard of election, and also with the king's promise to accept whoever they should elect; he having, however, it was said,<sup>6</sup> bound them by an oath to choose John de Gray.

When the validity of the sub-prior's election came to be tried, over and above the pleas that it had been made by night, by a minority of the convent, and that not the more judicious part,<sup>7</sup> and without the king's consent, they now added, that they had sent him to Rome only as an envoy to oppose the nomination of John de Gray, binding him by a solemn oath, on pain of damnation, only to make use of the deed of election in the last extremity—i.e. in case the pope should shew an inclination to accept the person proposed by the king. Early in 1207 sentence was given; the first election was pronounced invalid, and the deputies proceeded to a new election. With the fear of the king before their eyes, and aware of his determination in favour of the Bishop of Norwich, they shewed a disposition to re-elect him. But the sentence of annulment which had been pronounced of his first election contained, as usual, a clause forbidding his aspiring in future to the honours of the archbishopric. This obstacle could only be removed by a dispensation. And there were important reasons which determined Innocent not to grant that dispensation. The candidate was one of the chaplains and dependants of the king. The court of the king of England was a bad school for an ecclesiastic. A strange bishop out of the palace of the Frank kings<sup>8</sup> was not more dreaded by the Roman inhabitants of a city of Gaul, than was one of the king's clerks by the Saxon inmates of an English monastery.

<sup>6</sup> Matt. Paris.

<sup>7</sup> Saniori parte.

<sup>8</sup> E palatio.

But not the Church of Canterbury only, but the whole Church of England was delivered bound into the hands of an enemy, if they should have imposed on them, as their chief pastor, one, who on theory renounced his own spiritual authority, and was willing to be forced into a see by the strong hand of power. And such a one as John de Gray, whose only capacity was for the business of the world, would be compelled almost to follow the steps of Hubert, who, as Justiciary and Chancellor, had acted rather as a treasurer or bailiff to the estates of the see, than as a prelate to whom was committed the guardianship of the guardians of souls.

But if De Gray was to be excluded, it was necessary to propose as a substitute one who should be every way unexceptionable—one who, while qualified by character, should be neither unknown nor unacceptable to the king. With this view he pointed out to the envoys Stephen Langton, who, as a native of England, and holding preferment there, had, in this respect, all that could be thought necessary. Even since his promotion to the cardinalate, which had taken place this year, John had himself written to him in very flattering terms, to say, that though he had for some time had his eye on him with the intention of calling him to immediate attendance on himself, he was yet pleased to hear of his high honours. The monks (Elias de Brantfield alone excepted) consented, Langton was elected, and Innocent wrote conciliatory letters to the king and the convent to prepare them to receive the new metropolitan. “The Apostolic See,” he told the king “might justly envy his kingdom the possession of a man mighty in word and deed both before God and before man, eminent both for his learning and his life; but his care for the interests of the see of Canterbury had prevailed over personal ties. But that,

in consulting the good of the Church of Canterbury, he had not neglected the king's honour, for the new archbishop was by birth an Englishman of a family known for their fidelity and devotion to him." And he besought him most urgently, "for God's honour and by the intercession of S. Thomas, to spare the liberty of a Church which had endured so many troubles, and to accord his favour to the new primate."

A pope writing to a king in a matter ecclesiastical might well have used a higher tone ; but he thought fit to adapt himself to the gross and worldly views of the monarch. John saw nothing but his will thwarted, and his right, as he thought, invaded. His rage was stirred, and his revenge was prompt. The monks of Canterbury were his first thought, and they were in his power. They had committed treason, he said. They had first made an election without his licence, which prejudiced his prerogative ; and now, when they had received money from his treasury to procure the confirmation of the bishop of Norwich, they had elected instead a known enemy of his own, Cardinal Langton. A knight, Fulk de Cantelupe by name, a ready agent where violence was to supersede law, hastened from his side. He summoned the sheriff of Kent, Henry de Cornhelle, with a party of armed retainers. The monks might prepare for the worst when they saw the men of blood, "who knew not civil usages,"<sup>9</sup> enter the cloister sword in hand. But S. Thomas had taught princes a lesson of policy at least. Even John would not make any more martyrs. Exile was the worst—exile from home—no, out of the kingdom they must go, and that forthwith ; the King would not have *his* abbey harbour traitors. If they did not move quickly, they

<sup>9</sup> *Milites crudelissimi, humanitatis ignari.* W.

should be burnt out. In terror and confusion, with no time for deliberation, they complied and withdrew — unadvisedly, it was afterwards thought ; nothing short of actual force should have moved them. Barefoot, amid the tears and sobs of the bystanders,<sup>1</sup> seventy Benedictines and one hundred lay brothers,<sup>2</sup> took leave of their church and cloister, and passed the sea into Flanders ; thirteen, from age or sickness, were unable to accompany them. The monks of the king's party were equally involved in the proscription, but, though driven from the kingdom, they were ashamed to share the refuge of those whose cause they had not shared.<sup>3</sup> For a refuge was prepared for them. The usual landing-place from England was Wissant, between Calais and Boulogne, the port from which Julius Cæsar had sailed. No sooner had they set foot on shore, than they were met by the pious Count of Gisnes. He brought them to his castle, set food before them, served them with his own hands, and provided beasts and waggons to carry them to S. Omer's. O worthy hospitality of the Christian noble ! — careful to entertain strangers ; lending to those of whom he could not borrow again. To S. Omer's these disciples of S. Thomas, treading in his steps, took their way. All along their route the religious of every order issued from their cloisters, with cross, tapers, and incense. Their entry into the city of Audomarus, the apostle of Flanders, was a procession. The whole body found entertainment and consolation for twelve days with the brethren of S. Bertin's. The

<sup>1</sup> Cont. Hov.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. S. Bertini. ap. M. & D. iii. 687.

<sup>3</sup> *Exceptis nonnullis pestilentibus et dyscolis, qui sicut matrem in tribulatione, sic fratres deseruerunt in peregrinatione.*  
Cont. Hov.

prior, with sixteen of his monks, remained there a whole year ; the rest were quartered in the various religious houses of the neighbourhood. Langton afterwards removed them into other monasteries in France. This hospitable conduct was visited upon them by John by the confiscation of all the property they held in England. On the other hand, the Pope rewarded it by a special letter of thanks and approbation.

Meanwhile Fulk and his foreign mercenaries revelled in the cloister of Christ Church. He had the custody or wardship of the goods and lands both of the see and the convent. The lands remained untilld ; but even the impious king had, in a way, a respect for holy things ; he dared not cause the daily office to cease in the church, which contained the still energizing remains of the holy martyr. The Brabantines might keep guard in the refectory, but pilgrims would still throng to the undercroft, and their prayers would still be heard. A tyrant may persecute the clergy, he dare not interfere with the religion of the people. By the king's order, some religious were transferred from the Abbey of S. Augustine to minister in the cathedral.

Having vented his rage on the monks, John now threatened the pope. " He had been insulted," he said, " by the rejection of the bishop of Norwich, his fast friend, and the attempt to force upon him one Stephen of Langton, a total stranger to him, of whom all he knew was, that he had lived long among his public enemies in France. He could not enough marvel at the thoughtlessness of the Court of Rome herein, that it should so lightly forget how needful to it was his love and attachment, seeing that it drew more abundant revenue out of his kingdom than out of all the countries *beyond the Alps*." He added : " that he would stand

to the death, if need were, for the liberties of his Crown; and that his unalterable resolve was, not to recede from the appointment of John de Gray, which he had ascertained was for his realm's welfare. If he was not humoured in this matter, he would cut off all communication with Rome; neither should his realm be drained of its wealth, nor his subjects, whether in England, or in any other part of his dominions, seek at a foreigner's hands that justice which his own bishops had learning and knowledge enough to administer."

Innocent was not taken by surprise. Before proceeding so far, he had counted on being opposed with the king's whole strength, and he was ready to meet it. On the 16th of June he consecrated Langton with his own hands at Viterbo. He remonstrated with John "on the violent and unbecoming language in which he had answered his conciliatory application. It was rather to the honour than the blame of Langton that he had devoted himself to study at Paris with such success, that he had attained the degree of Doctor, not only in Arts but in Theology, and that his life agreeing with his learning, he had been promoted to a prebend in that cathedral. His distinction in the university made it incredible he should be unknown to the king, at least by reputation. The King had himself written him letters of compliment on his promotion. The known loyalty of his family, and his prebend in the church of York, which was of much greater value and dignity than that of Paris,<sup>4</sup> were sufficient answer to the charge of his being alien to the king, and the king's realm. There was an unworthy imputation on his personal character, which the king had not thought fit to

<sup>4</sup> *Paris* was not a metropolitan see till 1623.



write, but had not disdained to suggest through his messenger ; it was so manifestly false, that it was not thought worth while to deny it. Lastly, as to the plea that the king's licence to elect had not been asked : 1. Neither law nor custom required this when an election was made at the Apostolic See ; yet, 2, though the Pope had in this instance plenary power over the Church of Canterbury, he had so far deferred to the king's honour as to make a formal application to the king to send his proctor to the election. And though it was true that the two monks charged with this message had been detained at Dover, their despatches had been handed over to the king's own messengers. And, last of all, after the election, the papal courier had delivered to the king himself letters both of the Apostolic See and of the monks, asking the king's consent to the election. It was impossible, therefore, without injury both to his character and conscience, that the pope could now refrain from confirming and enforcing an election which, both in form and the fitness of the person chosen, was canonical, and that he could suffer the Church of Canterbury to be any longer without a shepherd. Do you, then," he concludes, "most dear son, whose honour we have considered beyond what was needful, shew to our honour at least due deference, that you may deserve more abundantly Heaven's and our grace, lest haply by other manner of conduct you bring yourself into a strait, out of which you may not easily draw yourself. Needs must He prevail to whom is bowed every knee, whose place we, though unworthy, occupy on earth. Be not, then, governed by their counsels who seek to trouble you, that they may the *better fish* in troubled waters ; but commit yourself to *our pleasure* in this instance, and it shall redound to

your praise. It cannot be safe for you to withstand that Church for which the blessed martyr and glorious high priest, Thomas, hath newly shed his blood ; since, too, your father and brother, of renowned memory, some-while kings of England, renounced that evil custom in the hands of our legates. If you shall in humility submit to us, we shall take care that no prejudice shall be done herein to you or yours."

This letter to the king was accompanied by others to the barons, and to the bishops. "The present cause," he wrote to the latter, "was not that of an individual, but of the whole Church. In such a cause they should rejoice to suffer persecution, if necessary ; remembering, that blessed are they who suffer for righteousness' sake, when they are tried they shall receive a crown of life. If they had truly at heart the cause of Christ, he would give them strength and fortitude to fear God more than man, and respect their Heavenly King rather than their earthly prince. Let them, with every instance of timely urgency, strive to turn the king away from his purpose, not fearing to offend him for the moment. For such counsellors as should encourage him now in his evil designs, he himself, when he came to a better mind, would ever after hold cheap, but would esteem such as should now suggest good to him."

Towards the end of the year he commissioned the bishops of London, Ely, and Worcester to make a final attempt to soften the king,—to admonish him, for his soul's health, not to fight against God ; empowering them, should he persist in obduracy, to lay the whole of England under an Interdict.

The three bishops obtained admission to the king's presence. They besought him humbly, and with abundance of tears, that having God before his eyes, he

would avoid the shame of an Interdict. He need but admit the archbishop and allow the monks to return, and all would be well. And what was there so great in that? They prayed that for this, He who recompense good deserts, might be pleased to multiply his temporal power, and bestow never-ending glory after this life. They would have prolonged their entreaties out of love for his soul, but the king broke into one of his furious fits of passion. He cursed the pope and the cardinals and swore by God's teeth, that if his realm was interdicted he would drive the whole clergy, secular and regular, out of it. He would take all they possessed, and they might go to the pope if they would. And as for the Roman clergy, if he caught any in any part of his dominions, he would pluck out their eyes and cut off their noses, and send them to Rome in that condition, that they might be known there from those of all other nations. And he recommended the three bishops, if they would avoid some such scandal in their own persons, to quit his presence immediately.

The bishops could not doubt John's sincerity in this. His paroxysms of ungovernable rage were terrible. One who knew him when Earl of Mortaigne,<sup>5</sup> describes it as "something beyond anger: his whole body was metamorphosed. His face was drawn up into deep furrows, his eyes gleamed with fire, a livid hue took the place of colour. Well do I know what would have become of the chancellor, if in the hour of his rage he had gotten him between his hands." There was something unearthly in the phrenzy of the Plantagenet princes. They themselves were aware of this, and believed it to arise from a real admixture of demoniacal blood in their

<sup>5</sup> Ric. Divisiens. p. 31.

race. Richard I. used frequently to relate a family tradition, in explanation of the headstrong disposition of himself and his brothers. "From the devil we came," he would say, "and to him we go." There was once a Countess of Anjou of uncommon beauty. She seldom went to church, and even then avoided staying for the celebration of the holy mysteries. The count her husband took notice of this, and suspected something amiss. One day he caused her to be held by four of his guards ; when, not being able to endure the consecration of the host, she rose through the air, leaving her cloak in their hands, and was no more seen.<sup>6</sup>

There is, indeed, a diseased impotence of passion incident to minds withdrawn from the restraint which the presence of equals exerts even over those who have the misfortune to want the self-control that moral or religious habits give. The exercise of despotic authority is a great promoter of this disease. It may be a species of mania peculiar to absolute princes. Cambyses, several of the early emperors of Rome, Nadir Shah, and the Emperor Paul, are cases in point. "The wrath of kings is as the roaring of a lion," says the Book of Proverbs. When Nebuchadnezzar was "full of fury," the "form of his visage was changed against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego." Such passages might have a terrible reality in oriental monarchs.

One in that condition, however, was not to be reasoned with : the bishops withdrew in haste. They delayed the sentence still, in fond hopes that the royal mind would open to better thoughts. When they could no longer withhold it, they again met, and on Monday in Holy Week (1208), which happened to be the vigil

<sup>6</sup> Fordun. Scotichron. Johan. Brompton.

of the Annunciation, they proclaimed the sentence of general Interdict over the whole of England.

From that moment all spiritual acts must cease ; all visible intercourse between heaven and earth was suspended, and the Church withdrawn from the kingdom, —or rather, its life and soul were withdrawn, while the body remained. As an ecclesiastical act, the features which most struck the minds of the country people were, that the daily sacrifice ceased, the doors of the churches were shut against them ; that the dead were carried outside the town-gates and buried in ditches and road-sides, without prayer or priest's offices. The images of apostles and saints were taken down or veiled ; the frequent tinkle of the convent bell no longer told the serf at the plough how the weary day was passing, or guided the traveller through the forest to a shelter for the night. Religion, wont to mix with and hallow each hour of the day, each action of life, was totally withdrawn. The state of the country resembled a raid of the Danes, or the days of old Saxon heathendom, before Augustine had set up the Cross at Canterbury, or holy men had penetrated the forest and the fen.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> *Nudata stabant altaria et lugubrem desolationem præferabant ; non assuetorum devota cantuum resonabat modulatio, nec consolatoria campanarum audita est dulcedo.* Coldingham, p. 25.

## CHAPTER III.

AN Interdict, to those who read history with eyes hostile to the Church, must appear the most audacious form of spiritual tyranny ; but, in fact, such persons renounce *any* real application of the power of binding and loosing in Heaven. But even catholic Christians of this day, to whom the Church's power of delivering the disobedient to Satan for the punishment of the flesh, is an article of living practical belief, yet shrink from so sweeping an application of it, and have a secret feeling against the Interdict as a harsh and cruel measure. It is, they say, to involve the innocent with the guilty—nay, rather, to let the guilty escape, and to inflict his punishment on innocent thousands. Indeed we must go further ; for, with the firm belief which those ages had in the real effect of absolution and excommunication, if the Interdict was not completely agreeable to mercy and justice, it was no less than a wanton trifling with the power they believed themselves to hold from Christ. Thus many speak of the pope of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as an ambitious despot, who in his struggle for the mastery with temporal princes was as reckless of the souls of his spiritual troops as Napoleon was of the bodies and lives of his soldiers. With one who entertains such thoughts we care not to argue ; but to the obedient Christian, who loves the Church and her ancient ways, and is puzzled to reconcile the Interdict with her *tenderness towards the little ones of Christ's flock*, the following may be suggested :—

The Interdict, then, was a measure of mercy, an appeal, on its Divine side, to Providence ; on its human side, to all the generous feelings of the heart. For that age did not doubt that the magistrate, as well as the people, the governor as well as the governed, was subject to the one law of Christ. It could not imagine one moral law for the magistrate, and another for the subject. The one was as obnoxious to sin and error as the other ; and was there to be no one to warn, to rebuke, to recal into the paths of truth the one as well as the other ? Or was the prince alone, whose duties and responsibilities, as they were more and greater, involved more risk of spiritual fall than any, to be the only Christian left without the defence of confession, or the gracious means of restoration provided by penance ? The law of God, the law of the Church, looked at the sin, not at the sinner ; the distinctions of worldly rank are not contemplated in its spiritual jurisdiction. A prince, in becoming a Christian, in entering the Christian society, submits to all its rules, as fully as any other person, and the administrator of those rules is bound to enforce them on the prince as much as on any other. As these rules are only such as are necessary to the end of the Church, the saving the souls of its members, they do not admit in their own nature of relaxation, but are permanent and universal. The submission of the prince to spiritual discipline cannot be altered by the admission of the Church to a place and power in the state, for such submission is of the essence of that discipline. Princes, being Christians, continue liable to sin, to be rebuked, to be excommunicated, to be restored by penance, as much after the establishment of the Church as before.

But the social polity of the middle ages admitted *something* further than this.

The sovereign power in each state is supreme, and without appeal within its own limits; but beyond these limits it finds itself controlled by a higher power, by international law. This is not a theory, but a fact of universal history: it is a fact in feudal times as well as in modern Europe. Through all the gradations of feudalism the lord, supreme within his own domain, had his peers outside of that domain; so, at the top of the tree, the prince had princes his equals, with whom he had of necessity relations, and to whom he therefore owed duties. Wherever a state-system exists—and it must exist, except in the single case of universal empire—the establishment of the Church must be very imperfect, if it is only set side by side with the civil power within each state, and not also set side by side with the external all-controlling power. It is not enough that national law admit the Church as an element in the state, unless international law admit it as an element in the state-system. The duties of princes towards their lieges become christian, and so must the duties of princes towards one another. Christendom now, as then, forms one system, and acknowledges a common law. Since the beginning of the Protestant religion, international law has been based on morality, and enforced by public opinion; before, it was based on the Gospel, and enforced by the power of the Keys. Ours is entrusted to alliances and compacts, amenable (as bodies) to public opinion alone; theirs to a Christian bishop, bound in conscience and before God to act according to a well-known and well-defined ecclesiastical law. Both agree in admitting, in the last resort, the interference of an armed force to compel submission, or punish flagrant infraction of this common law. They differ in the person whom they constitute



the judge, ours making the courts interested, such—theirs, a synod of bishops, men who could not be interested. As, too, that age considered it the duty of the temporal power in each state to enforce the Church's sentence on the refractory individual, so it equally recognized the power of the whole of Christendom to enforce the Church's sentence on the refractory prince. As the obstinate heretic was considered beyond the pale of national, so the excommunicated prince was beyond the pale of international, law : and as the people then suffered from the spiritual sword, so now, in the parallel case, they suffer from the temporal—from war, whether as soldiers or as invaded.

From the establishment of the Church, it followed that temporal penalties attended spiritual sentences. But spiritual sentences passed against all sin, whether the sinner were prince or peasant ; and in each case carried with them the appropriate temporal penalty. But a respectful distinction was made. A private person, whether baron or knight, or of lower degree, contumaciously refusing satisfaction, was at once excommunicated ; but princes, as entrusted by God with temporal power for the behoof of their people, stood not alone ; other interests were involved in their welfare. Neither people nor prince can sin, so Holy Scripture teaches, without mutually involving each other in the guilt. The sins of David and Abimelech were visited on their people, not on themselves.<sup>8</sup>

As it was more grievous, then, that a prince should

<sup>8</sup> *Quicquid delirant reges, &c.* is a belief of natural religion even. Alexander of Russia, in the inundation which devastated St. Petersburg in 1824, rode into the crowd of sufferers crying out, "My children, you are suffering on my account. Yes, it is my sins that God thus visits on you." *Hurter, i. 3*

sin, as he brought thereby evil on others, and not on himself alone ; so more endeavour should be had to bring him to repentance, more time should be allowed, and the final sentence deferred, in hopes of his recovery by more gentle means. In making, then, an Interdict of the realm or province precede excommunication of the prince's person, it was sought to shew mercy rather than severity, to afflict the body rather than to bruise the head ; to excite the people to general prayer to God to turn the heart of the king, and to appeal to the generous feelings of the prince himself, as the father of his people, not to see them continue in misery through his obduracy. Hence, during the Interdict, fasting and all outward signs of mourning were enjoined. The faithful and the obedient thus mediated between God and the disobedient, and the city was spared for the ten's sake.

Human imperfection, indeed, often found place in the administration of this system. Cardinals were bribed, popes were intimidated, or their legates deceived them, or the legates themselves were cajoled by affected deference on the part of the monarch. But every possible precaution was taken. Through all the gradations of the hierarchy (which followed the pattern of the heavenly)<sup>9</sup> the superior had a power of prohibition on the exercise of excommunication by the inferior ; and the appeals allowed to the metropolitan, and finally to Rome, where a cause was sure of the most patient and thorough investigation, established a system of checks and counterchecks on caprice and indiscretion. Still it was, in the hands of the bad, prostituted to selfish purposes. It was a spiritual weapon

<sup>9</sup> *Ad instar cœlestis curiæ.*

with which hostile prelates fought one another. Instead of being limited to cases of obstinate heresy or perseverance in mortal sin, it was had recourse to on every occasion of difference between the Church and the prince. It was too much used to protect the property of the Church, or the persons of ecclesiastics. In 1196, the archbishop of Rouen laid all Normandy under an Interdict, because Richard had seized on his castle of Roch Andelay, to fortify it.<sup>1</sup> The bishop of Ely did the same to his own diocese, for the sake of annoying the same archbishop, who was at that time opposed to him in the state. The town of St. Omer's was interdicted by the abbot of S. Bertin's, in a dispute about a piece of fen ground. Giraldus relates a sort of ecclesiastical duel that he himself fought with the bishop of S. Asaph, about a church over which both parties claimed to have jurisdiction. The zealous archdeacon sallied out at the head of his clerks, in their stoles and surplices, and lighted candles in their hands, and met the bishop at the entrance of the churchyard. If the bishop began the sentence of excommunication, Giraldus began on his side at the same moment. The bishop delivered a general sentence of anathema ; Giraldus did the same. And so the combatants stood, face to face, for some time, till Giraldus bethought him of the church bells. "The sound of these, when rung against themselves, the Welsh do greatly abhor ;" Giraldus gave the signal, and those within the church began to toll them, whereupon the bishop and his party mounted their horses and rode off as fast as they could.<sup>2</sup>

Familiar, then, as this punishment was to the people

<sup>1</sup> Rad. de Diceto, 694.

<sup>2</sup> De Rebus a se gestis, p. 403.

of England, and softened as was its rigour by the disuse of some of its first accompaniments, there were yet some circumstances peculiar to this present Interdict, which explains the horror by which it was regarded by the people, and hence the secret force by which it at last brought the king to submit. A chronicler,<sup>3</sup> who wrote a century afterwards, bears witness to the impression that this Interdict left, in the words "*Et memoriale hoc jam durat in sæcula.*" 1. Its extent. It was the first and the last which extended to the whole kingdom; Wales and Ireland were expressly included. 2. Its duration, upwards of six years. 3. The strictness with which it was enforced. The ordinary privileges of particular orders were suspended. Among others, the Cistercians, and the order of Grandmont, as their houses were placed in lonely and remote spots, where their chanting could not be generally heard, were allowed exception in ordinary cases of Interdict. The strict care, however, shewn in observing this Interdict, had induced them, at first, to waive their privilege, and comply, like others. But when time went on, and there were no signs of the king's giving way, some of the Cistercian houses, bethinking themselves of this privilege, re-opened their churches, rung their bells, and chanted the offices as usual.

Their motive seems to have been a good one. They urged, in their appeal to Rome, the relaxation of discipline, and indevotion, which such a long disuse of the Divine service occasioned. Indeed, in any monastery, especially of the more severe orders, the change made by the cessation of the daily mass and the hours, must have been nothing less than a total break-up

<sup>3</sup> Hemingford, p. 553.

of their established life, internal and external. only was the best part of their occupation gone, that which supported them under their austerities withdrawn.<sup>4</sup> Innocent, however, did not allow the claim. It would be invidious, he told them, to the other religious, to whom they ought rather to be a example of severity, seeing they received tithes of their lands. And it was very different allowing them this privilege now, when they had begun by observing the Interdict, from what it would have been had they from the first taken no notice of it. It would have the appearance, both to the king and others, of a slackening zeal on the part of the clergy, and a desire to give up the contest. Not, however, to deprive the monks altogether of the Divine food, or the kingdom of the benefit of the precious sacrifice of the altar, he, on Langton's intercession, so far relaxed the rigour, as to allow the celebration of mass once in the week, in conventual churches, provided the doors were shut to keep out all strangers, no bell rung, and the service only said, not chanted. Even from this indulgence were excepted such Cistercian houses as had broken the injunction.

Practice had established some mitigations, also, in behalf of the poor country folk, and the long duration of this interdict, drew others from the mercy of the pope. Absolution to the dying, and baptism to infants, being sacraments of necessity, were allowed. The mixture for the chrism was prepared by special licence, when what was in use was exhausted. Marriages and churchings took place at the church door; sermons

<sup>4</sup> *Propter divinorum subtractionem quidam indevotiores effecti amplius duruerunt.* Inn. Ep. xiii. 43.

were preached on Sundays to the people in the open air, when holy water and bread were distributed.<sup>5</sup>

Princes had their own established way of meeting the exertion of spiritual power. No sooner was the sentence published, than John issued orders to the sheriffs to order every priest who should dare to observe it, whether monk or secular, to quit the kingdom. He had learnt this lesson from Philip Augustus, who had done the same eight years before. This, warned by the too precipitate retreat of the monks of Christ Church, which had been at the time generally condemned, the clergy refused to do, and the king's officers did not dare to turn them out of their monasteries by force. All their lands and revenues, however, were seized into the king's hands, the king's seal put upon their granaries and storehouses, and their contents applied to the uses of the exchequer ; the royal reasoning, in this respect, being the intelligible one, that if the clergy would not perform their functions, they should not receive their dues. "You bishops," Philip Augustus, in the same situation, said to the bishop of Paris, "care for nothing so long as you can eat and drink your large revenues ! You heed not what becomes of the poor ! Look you, that I do not strike at your manger, by seizing your goods."

And now began a scene of spoliation, which almost reminds us of the sixteenth century. The wardship of church-lands became an object of competition among the king's friends. Harpy courtiers and needy military adventurers from Poitou, were put in possession of the lands of the bishops and abbeys, the best cultivated in the kingdom. Others were set to sale.<sup>6</sup> Sometimes, an abbot or a chapter would purchase the custody of

<sup>5</sup> *Chron. Dunstaple.*

<sup>6</sup> *Rot. Claus. 107—110.*

their own lands. Bare necessities, food and cloth were ordered to be allowed the clergy out of their goods. "Reasonable eatage,"<sup>7</sup> was adjudged to be a monk, two dishes a day for his dinner ; for a secular priest four sworn men of the parish were to decide what was necessary.

If the parish priest fared better, he was, in another point, open to a peculiar source of annoyance. In spite of all efforts, the bishops had never been able to compel the parish clergy in England to observe continence. The abuse was partially reformed from time to time, but a relapse soon followed. The secular priests at that time, seem to have been living generally throughout the country in a state of concubinage. In Wales was the case even with the secular chapters. All the "focariæ" were now, by the king's order, seized and imprisoned. They could not complain of this. The king would not help them here. Their own canons condemned them. And so the priests were put to the expense and cost of buying them off at heavy ransoms.

The Interdict was a hard trial for the clergy, the most direct one of their faith and obedience. The dilemma they were in was one in which they could not doubt what was their duty, whatever difficulty they might feel in following it. "Miserable man that I am," said one in a similar case ; "If I disobey the king I lose my worldly estate ; if I hearken not to my lord Pope I peril my soul !" The case, indeed, was plain. There was no plea or subterfuge under which they could refuse to recognize the Interdict. All the higher clergy throughout England, (three bishops, and a few secular clerks excepted,) unanimously braved the king's vengeance.

<sup>7</sup> Rationabile estuverium.

And this was neither trifling nor transient. As long as a monk kept within his cloister, he might have but one meal a day, but his person was at least safe. But no sooner did he venture to appear abroad, or travel in his religious dress, than he was liable to be robbed and murdered with impunity. General sentence of outlawry was passed<sup>s</sup> against the clergy. Once, in the Welsh marches, a robber was brought before the king handcuffed, who had murdered a priest on the road. "Let him go, he has rid me of one of my enemies," was John's summary sentence. All the kindred who could be found of Langton, and of the three bishops who had pronounced the sentence, were thrown into dungeons, and their property confiscated.

A scholar at Oxford, practising archery, accidentally shot a woman. He immediately absconded. The mayor of the city, with a great posse, came to the inn where he lodged. The delinquent was not to be found, but three students, who were joint occupants of the same inn with him, they seized and imprisoned. John happened to be close at hand, at Woodstock, and he sent immediate orders to hang all the three. This the citizens did, nothing loth. The University complained to Rome ; and the whole body of scholars and masters, by authority of a papal bull, withdrew from Oxford, and were dispersed among the various other schools, chiefly Cambridge, Reading, and Maidstone. A few masters, (for the king had a party here) disobeyed the order, but they were suspended from teaching for three years. In three years' time, the townspeople professed contrition, made submission to the legate, and did penance. Besides satisfaction in money, the more guilty part were

<sup>s</sup> Utlagatio.



required to go barefoot, and in their shirts, with whips in their hands, to each of the churches in the city—one church every day till they had gone through them all—and beg absolution from the priest. And as soon as the Interdict should be removed, they were to attend in the same guise the burial of the three scholars they had hung; for their bodies, like those of all the clergy who died during its continuance, were kept, that they might be buried in the churchyard.

John's hatred of, and violence towards the clergy, did not date from the Interdict. The Cistercians were especially obnoxious to him. For, as the flower of the Church, they attracted the concentrated enmity of the bad. Like the Jesuits now-a-days, they bore the burden of the world's hatred. The wit and malice of the dissolute and profane, discharged itself with aggravated venom on the white monks. Whole heaps of these blasphemous tirades are yet preserved in our libraries. In 1204, in a parliament at Lincoln, the Cistercian abbots, in a body, presented themselves before John, to endeavour to appease his anger. Turning to the men-at-arms, by whom he was surrounded, "Ride them down," he cried. The savage order, unheard of before from the mouth of a Christian prince, was disobeyed.<sup>8</sup>

These violences might be considered the outburst of the uncontrolled passions of a tyrant, but that the very same had been resorted to by a wise and politic monarch like Philip Augustus. But John was not a Philip Augustus. Philip was the slave of passion in one instance; John, at all times, and in everything.

<sup>8</sup> MS. Cott. ap. Dugd. M. A.

Hence, when Philip incurred the censure of the Church, though he had had the support of his barons and whole kingdom, yet he had yielded or been subdued at last. Conscience, it may be hoped, was too strong for him,—for the sympathy of numbers will bear a bad man up in any cause. The usual policy of those who resist the Church has been to enlist the better feelings of the world on their side. But John could not submit to the constraint that this required. He would not even live with his own baronage, and they equally avoided him; and he only intruded into their castles in pursuit of his adulterous amours. These he followed without disguise and without restraint. There was scarce a noble family but had to revenge the disgrace of a wife, a daughter, or a sister.

He surrounded himself with new men, creatures of his own, adventurers from Poitou and Gascony, — not the Poitevin nobles, for they had drawn off from him as much as the English. As he had no faith in his own barons, he determined to secure them by fear. He sent, accordingly, some of his retainers with an armed force round the kingdom, and exacted hostages from some of the more formidable of them. Such was their fear of the king's power that none dared refuse.

A powerful baron on the Welsh marches was William de Brause; and his wife Matilda, daughter of a French knight, Bertrand de S. Valery, was even more redoubted than her husband.<sup>9</sup> The terror were they both of the Welsh marauders, whose cupidity was excited by the

<sup>9</sup> Il n'étoit nulle parole de sen baron aviers chou qu'étoit di lui. Chron. Norm. Bene novimus quod non erat in potestate sua, sed magis in potestate uxoris suæ. Lit. Joan. ap. Rymer.

twelve thousand English-bred kine that grazed round the castle of Abergavenny. She boasted that she had cheeses enough laid up in her dairy to supply one hundred men with ammunition for a month, if nothing else could be found to feed the engines with. When the king's servants came to her for hostages, she asked what had become of Arthur of Bretagne? Did they think she would give up her son to one who had taken such poor care of his own nephew? John's vengeance was instantaneous. A body of knights was sent to surprise De Brause in his castle. He had barely time to fly into Ireland with his wife and children. The latter fell into John's hands during his Irish expedition. He imprisoned them at Windsor, where he starved them to death.

But, notwithstanding all his violence, John had misgivings. He knew he was not so strong as he seemed to be. The badness of his title to the crown was always before him. He suspected his barons; he thought they were practising in secret against him. He began to manifest a desire for a reconciliation with the Church, and there were hopes of a speedy recal of the Interdict. Langton himself made an effort to soften the king, and wrote to him, begging him to consider the dishonour he brought on himself by his obstinacy in evil. John answered this letter. He stuck to his point, that Langton had not been canonically elected; but hinted, that if he was disposed to resign all the claims which he might consider himself to have on the see of Canterbury, the king would provide for the honour of that Church in a way, perhaps, not to the disadvantage of Langton: and he sent him an invitation to come over to England, but not as archbishop. This *insidious attempt* to bribe Langton to give up the point

at issue, by the lure of preferment for himself, was of course rejected.

The king then required the return of the bishops of Ely and Worcester. They came, and waited on the king for eight days, but he would not see them. There was something ominous in this ; he could not yet digest his rage, so they returned. He sent a fresh deputation to Rome, to represent strongly what he called his grievances, but, at the same time, to signify that he was willing, out of his desire for peace, to yield somewhat of what was justly due to him. He would recognize the archbishop, let him return in safety, and restore what had been taken from the see. And even the monks of Christ Church, though they had deceived him so infamously, he would allow to return. But, he said, his mind was still so exasperated against the archbishop, that he could not admit him to his presence. He would hand over to Innocent the crown rights on the temporalities of the see, and begged that the pope himself would invest the archbishop with them.

His agent in this negotiation was, strangely enough, a Cistercian abbot. But he was an abbot of John's own making, and of an abbey of his own founding, so that he was probably an ecclesiastic of a right royal fashion. Only four years before this John had brought some Cistercians from the continent, and settled them in one of the fairest spots on the southern coast rightly named Beaulieu ; it was partly in a transient fit of remorse, partly to expiate the cruel afforesting of the district in which it stood—the New Forest.

Innocent would not discourage any overtures, though attended with such a strange condition. He accepted the *regalia*, but was careful to protest in his com-

sion, delegating the power of conferring them to two bishops, that he did so for the sake of peace, and that it was not to be a precedent. He looked forward at this time to the speedy adjustment of the dispute. In writing to the bishops of Ely and London, in June of this year, he answers on several points of ritual, on which they had consulted him, under the hope that all such difficulties would soon be removed.

Strangers, too, interposed their mediation. Henry duke of Saxony, the king's nephew, visited his uncle, and tried to induce him to give way. And the emperor Otho wrote to him with the same object.<sup>1</sup> A second time he sent an invitation to the three bishops, Ely, London, and Worcester, who accordingly came to Canterbury. The King was gone on an expedition into Scotland, but had deputed some, both clergy and laymen, to treat with them. Terms of accommodation were agreed on, reduced to writing, and sealed on both sides. The three bishops and the archbishop were to return to their sees, the lands of which were to be given up to them, and a hundred pounds each given them in part restitution of the intercepted proceeds, and the waste committed.

Here was a new and vexatious source of disagreement. The King thought the bishops ought to be glad enough to get back on any terms, and that he did enough in admitting the archbishop at all, more than which ought not to be asked of him. The bishops would not recede from what had been settled, so the agreement remained null. No doubt John was sincere in wishing a reconciliation ; he was not merely trifling to gain time. But he had no idea of giving up

<sup>1</sup> Ann. Wav.

the point at issue; he would not yield in any such way as should seem to be waiving his absolute nomination. A compromise for the mere sake of peace, unless there was a clear admission that all the steps taken on the Church side were just and right, would now be a throwing away of all the suffering that had been endured.

It might, however, be part of the king's policy to protract matters by negotiation, for all this while excommunication was hanging over him; this was the necessary sequel to the Interdict when resisted. In January 1209, the pope sent notice, according to form, of the impending sentence. He implored the king to "consider how he risked his salvation by his prolonged impenitence. He was truly cruel to himself. The fatherly affection of the pope was hateful to him; but, as a skilful and tender physician, he would not shrink from applying painful remedies, however reluctant the patient might be. If he did not, therefore, follow up the agreement concluded through the abbot of Beau-lieu, sentence of excommunication would proceed against him after a delay of three months."<sup>2</sup>

This alarmed John. An Interdict afflicted his subjects, and lowered his own character; but to excommunicate him, was to touch his person. He must then be avoided by all but the utterly abandoned; and even these would feel a superiority over him, as their continuing to associate with him would be a favour: they would become necessary to him. So deep was religious sentiment seated in that age, that even contact with an excommunicate was shrunk from with loathing, as from leprosy. The room, the house, the town,

<sup>2</sup> Inn. Ep. xi. 221.

in which he was, was polluted by his presence ; priest might not offer the holy sacrifice within its walls ; the very cup he drank from was unfit for Christ's use. When dead, his body was to be buried in rubbish ; if forcibly interred in a churchyard, the ground required to be consecrated afresh.<sup>3</sup> The religious instincts of the community thus brought home the sentence even to those who set at nought its spiritual consequences. And as its effects could not be averted, the policy of princes was to hinder its publication or reception within their territories. Henry II. had once hurried over to Ireland, to be out of the way of an excommunication he thought was coming upon him. So now, all the ports were strictly guarded, and every traveller rigorously searched ; and the most cruel vengeance awaited any who should bring, pronounce, or act upon, the sentence.

The three months allowed had been long exceeded in continually disappointed hopes of a settlement. A reprieve was again obtained till the octave of S. Michael's. Several messages passed between the king and archbishop, and at last he was again invited to meet the king at Dover, letters of safe conduct being sent him both by the king and some of the barons. With the bishops of London and Ely, he crossed to Dover on the 2nd of October. The king came to Chilham castle, near Canterbury, and sent the justiciary and the bishop of Winchester with certain articles which they were to demand of the archbishop. They were such as he could not agree to, and he recrossed the sea.

The sentence could now be deferred no longer, the Interdict having endured with so much suffering to the

<sup>3</sup> See the law in Decret. Greg. ix. Tit. 39.; for the practice, *Hüter.* iii. 113.

people for nearly two years. At the close of the year, accordingly, Langton forwarded a bull, which he had before received to that effect, to the bishop of Arras, and the abbot of S. Vedastus, where the exiled bishops of London and Ely were lodged, requiring them to publish the sentence, with the proper forms, in that city. They did so, and sent it to England; but the bishops who still remained there, durst not publish it, and kept it to themselves. The secret got out notwithstanding; men whispered it to one another, under their breath, in the streets or the market; and even so it made no little stir and commotion. Two instances may be given. Geoffry, archdeacon of Norwich, one day sitting at the Exchequer on the king's business, declared in confidence to his colleagues, that he did not think it safe for a clergyman to continue longer in the service of a prince excommunicate; and at once withdrew. He was instantly followed by the king's order, and thrown into a dungeon, with a heavy cope of lead round his neck, and left in that condition to die of starvation.<sup>4</sup> Another of the king's officers, Hugh, archdeacon of Wells, the chancellor, having been put by the king into the see of Lincoln, procured leave to cross into Normandy, under pretext of receiving consecration from the archbishop of Rouen. But he was no sooner safe out of the kingdom, than he betook himself to Langton, at Pontigny, swore canonical obedience to him, and was consecrated by him. The temporalities of the see of Lincoln were immediately seized into the King's hands, and the great seal given to Walter, a brother of John de Gray.

<sup>4</sup> *Tam victualium penuriâ, quam ipsius capæ ponderositate.*  
*Wend.*



## CHAPTER IV.

THE year 1209 closed with the excommunication ; and now there ensued three dismal years of hopeless distress for people and clergy. Hope of speedy redress had hitherto borne them up : but all semblance of negotiation with Rome was broken off ; the ports were strictly guarded to prevent all ingress and egress without the royal licence. Want, distress, and insult, was the daily lot of the clergy, while the supports and occupations of a religious life were withdrawn. Many of the religious houses were quite broken up by the wanton oppression of those who had the custody of them ; and the religious were dispersed over the country, to beg a shelter in other monasteries, or from the charity of the country folk. The bareness of the monastic annals during the latter half of John's reign, as compared with the period preceding and following, bear witness to this persecution. What aggravated their suffering was, that it was not a crisis of national confusion ; a general disturbance, in which all suffered alike, and the excitement of action brought relief. Throughout the kingdom all went on as usual. The king kept court in state at the great festivals. They passed, indeed, without mass or prayer, in the church or out of it ; but the nobles presented themselves to pay their duty, and receive the robes distributed on such occasions ; and woe<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> *Rex omnibus sese subtrahentibus nocive insidiabatur.*  
*Wend.*

to him who was suspected of absenting himself out of regard to the excommunication.

John invaded Scotland, Ireland, Wales ; was followed by his feudal tenants, just as his father would have been, and returned with success on each occasion. The intervals of military undertakings were filled up by the usual expedients for extorting money, and attention to the preservation of game. He watched over this with as much jealousy as William Rufus himself. In one of these years, all enclosures within old forest boundaries were ordered to be thrown down ; in another, the game law was, for the first time, extended to birds, and the capture of them prohibited throughout the kingdom.

That all this should go on in the midst of the Interdict, struck the king himself ; and he said one day, in cutting up a fine hart, in his bitter way, " This beast never heard a mass, and yet couldn't be fatter ! " Every now and then his savage nature found vent in some particular act of oppression—in torturing Jews, or in sacking a Cistercian convent. The worst barbarities were attended, in the genuine spirit of the ancient tyrants, with mockery and jest.<sup>6</sup>

Never before had a king and his court so long and obstinately set at defiance their own conscience from within, and the religious sentiment of Christendom from without. Henry I. had had the whole of the Norman bishops with him ; Henry II. had been backed by a large party of the clergy both at home and abroad, while S. Thomas was but feebly supported by Rome,

\* The well known ballad of King John and the Abbot of Canterbury, (Percy Rel. ii. 302,) though we have it only in a modern form, well expresses the enjoyment John found in tormenting an ecclesiastic.

and looked at with suspicion by all as high and extravagant in his demands. But John was the open enemy of the whole Church, and made no pretence of favouring any party in it. Even he, however, had his false prophets ready to prophesy good concerning him, and not evil. There is no form of hostility to the Church, from the most rigid puritanism down to avowed libertinism, which is not willing to mask itself under a religious theory of some kind. Among the court clerks was one Alexander, surnamed the Mason. He had studied at Paris, and had some reputation for learning. He now began to preach the doctrine that John was ordained by Providence to be the scourge of his people, whose wickedness it was, and not any fault of the king's, that had brought down this visitation of the Interdict. The king was the rod of chastisement in the hand of the Lord, set up for this end, that he should rule the people with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Further, that the pope had no power to interfere with the rights of kings and temporal lords, or with the rule and regimen of any lay governors whatsoever. The Lord had committed to Peter power over the Church and things ecclesiastical only.

Whether under pretext of some such extreme theory as this, or in open defiance of conscience, and even of decency, many clerks still continued to frequent the court of the excommunicate prince. Among these were even three English bishops. That John de Gray, of Norwich,<sup>7</sup> should be one, cannot surprise us; though it must not be forgotten that the right of nomination was what John was maintaining and the Church was resisting, and the

<sup>7</sup> Norwicensis bestia. Polit. Songs.

character of the particular nominee, however bad, was not insisted on. The other two courtier bishops<sup>8</sup> were both Poitevins, put into the sees of Durham and Winchester, one by Richard, the other by John, for similar qualifications; both were men of ability, knowledge of the world, and of courts. Philip of Durham had been Richard's chaplain, and the sharer of his romantic adventures on his return from Palestine. He died about this time under a special excommunication. More distinguished than Philip was Sir Peter de Roches, of Winchester. He had been a knight, but he soon saw that good as the trade of war was, there was a better for him. The times of fighting-bishops were passing away, now that king Richard was dead, whose military enthusiasm was contagious. Innocent did not encourage them. Philip of Beauvais, who when forbidden to use sword or spear, was fain to content himself with a club, was like to have died in prison after he had been taken in arms by Mercadier. What could Celestine say, when, in answer to his demand that his son, the bishop of Beauvais, should be released, Richard sent him the bishop's hauberk, and begged him to "see whether this be thy son's coat or no?" The wily Poitevin resolved to make his fortune in the political world, and therefore entered the Church. Law feudal and canon law were now gaining a mastery over men, which they had never had since the barbarians came in. Manœuvre began to have the better of force, and the men of words carried it over the men of blows. A century or two later the diplomatists had it entirely their own way; armies became the chessmen of the cabinet; a century earlier, the class was al-

<sup>8</sup> *Episcopi curiales.*

most unknown. Just at this period, was the period of conflict between the two. At a later period such men were lawyers, juris-consults ; at this time they were priests and bishops. Peter de Roches was one of these. In the Holy Land the affairs of the Christians had been entirely in his management for five years ; and we need not be surprised to find him a Crusader. It is true the crafty in general stayed at home to make the most of the absence of the others. But religion was sometimes too strong, even for these.

For, by what may seem to us a strange contradiction, hardly even the worst men in those days threw off their allegiance to the Church. It is not, indeed, uncommon now, in the struggle between the Church and the world, to see a man take part against the Church, and yet continue to think himself, and to claim to be, influenced by religion. But he ranges himself outside the Church, and openly impugns her doctrine and discipline ; whereas, in those times, even such as sided with princes against the Church, placed their hope of salvation in her, and neither in thought or word infringed her unity. Philip of Durham, who braved excommunication in the cause of John, made a pilgrimage to Compostella for the remission of his sins, with the most devout faith. Peter de Roches undertook, in advanced age, the journey to the Holy Land, as penance for the part he took at this time. Even the godless John himself founded three monasteries, besides many other benefactions for his soul's health.

Peter de Roches had no mind to quit the chancery as Geoffry of Norwich had done. There might be an Interdict or excommunication, but some one must direct *the writs*. He was too fond of "handling the king's

roll”<sup>9</sup> to quit it lightly.<sup>1</sup> Besides those who adhered to the king, there were not above two or three of the bishops remaining in the kingdom. The rest had made their escape to the continent; no easy matter when the king’s officers kept a strict guard at all the principal ports.<sup>2</sup> The poor monks, who had not the means of flying, complained grievously of this desertion.<sup>3</sup>

Indeed, it is with truth that it has been said of the bishops and higher clergy of this period that, “None, generally speaking, stood morally lower than the English. None were more mightily fettered by the spirit of this world; none seem to have given so great offence by their temper and habits of life. Bitter and heart-felt, but justified by abundant instances, is the sorrow with which an English writer, William of Newburgh,<sup>4</sup> exclaims, “To the bishops of our time the world is not crucified, but clings most closely. They say not with the prophet, ‘Woe is me that the days of my sojourn here are prolonged!’ but even a long enjoyment of their eminence seems to them short. Keen is their sorrow when they must perforce take leave of their riches and enjoyments.”<sup>5</sup> And the character which the same writer gives of Hugh Pudsey of Durham, may serve for very

<sup>9</sup> Wintoniensis armiger,  
Ad computandum impiger,  
Piger ad Evangelium,  
Regis revolvens rotulum.” Polit. Songs, p. 10.

<sup>1</sup> Wintoniensis non tam ecclesiastica defensabat, quam regia administrabat. Cont. Hov.

<sup>2</sup> The bishops of Bath and Salisbury appear to have made their peace with the king immediately after the Interdict.—Vid. Rot. Claus. April 10. 1208.

<sup>3</sup> Coldingham.

<sup>4</sup> V. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Hürter. iii. 331.

many of the contemporary prelates ; " A man of much experience in the ordering of earthly affairs, and of ready tongue, though without much learning ; of a most ardent thirst for money, and well acquainted with all the methods of getting it."<sup>1</sup>

Let us turn for a few moments from the dreary spectacle here presented, to one which may in some degree serve as its counterpoise. Pontigny—as it had been S. Thomas's, as it was to be S. Edmund's—was now Langton's chosen refuge and resting-place. S. Edmund, an exile in the same cause, remembered Langton's reception here as a subject of consolation to himself. Here, debarred from a more active sphere, with no prospect (at one time at least) of being permitted to discharge the high and perilous duties to which he had been called, Langton gave himself up to the occupations of a religious life, to meditation and assiduous study of Holy Scripture. " Princes did sit and speak against me, but Thy servant was occupied in Thy statutes ;" for it was probably during these years that he wrote his *Commentaries*.

Unfortunately these are almost entirely unknown to us, but by the accounts, scanty enough, of early writers. Not that they have all perished—many still remain in manuscript. We can at least judge of Langton's industry by the number of works ascribed to him. A bare catalogue of the titles of these would fill several pages. It is probable that many of these may be erroneously so ascribed ; but it is equally probable that many have perished whose names even are unknown to us. This is an investigation interesting to the antiquary, but not within the scope of this history. Before the Revolution the li-

<sup>1</sup> Newburgh, *ibid.*

braries of Cistercian houses in France teemed with them.<sup>7</sup> They had been propagated, no doubt, from Pontigny ; and in this country they were widely dispersed. But our press in the sixteenth century rapidly becoming Puritan, little of that vast body of theology which the three scholastic centuries had produced, was preserved by it ; while every scrap of that undercurrent of profane and heretical literature, which had before been circulated only in secret, was eagerly treasured up, as it seemed to give an ancestry and antiquity to the new Protestant doctrines. Scurrilous diatribes against the monks, indecent amatory effusions, ribald drinking-songs, mixed with the darker superstitions of the southern heretics, the literature of the tavern and the brothel, were diligently printed and commented on. For even the ages of faith had their irreligious element ; and on this, with the sure instinct of unconscious sympathy, the Reformation fastened. "The Reformers were astonished and delighted to find that three and four centuries before, their ancestors had protested so strongly against the abuses which they had now succeeded in correcting, and they were eager to publish and translate the biting satires by which their sentiments had been bequeathed to posterity."<sup>8</sup>

In the poor relics which the ignorant fanaticism of the sixteenth century has left us, of the once rich stores of English theology, Langton's writings form a considerable proportion. Scarce a manuscript collection of any importance, which does not contain one or more of them. What are ascribed to him may be divided into the following classes :—1. Commentaries on nearly all

<sup>7</sup> Oudin. ii. p. 1697.

<sup>8</sup> Wright, *Introd. to Walter Mapes*.



the books of the Old Testament. There were two very different methods of commenting on Holy Scripture followed at this time in the Latin Church. One originated about this period, being introduced by the new school method. This, so far as it was novel—for in all essentials, and almost in form, S. Augustine is a school-man—consisted in the application of the syllogism to every subject matter, and, among the rest, to the text of Holy Scripture. Not that the inspired writers were supposed to have themselves written syllogistically, but this was the means by which their sense could be most completely drawn out. A text, a clause, a single word, was taken, viewed in all the various meanings of which it was capable, and conclusions drawn from it under each of these meanings. This process is what is meant by the “scholastic philosophy,” which was a method, and not a philosophical system. To minds not disciplined in a severe logic, such a system of interpretation of Scripture will be wholly unprofitable; but where such a discipline exists as the basis of all education, this rigid accuracy of meaning, and correctness of deduction will be demanded by the mind as the indispensable vehicle of all instruction. Hence a class of commentary began to be written for the use of the universities; or rather, theological teachers read in the schools exegetical lectures on the sacred page (as it was called), many of which were preserved either by their own notes, or by those of their pupils. The skeleton of S. Thomas Aquinas’s lectures on S. Matthew and S. Luke is thus preserved, from notes taken by some hearer. The numerous commentaries of Albert the Great are of this description. This method is intellectual only, and *is adapted for learners*. Stephen Langton is said to *have been among the first who adopted this method*

with success.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, as a lecturer in the schools, he had no choice. A teacher must, if he will be listened to, adapt himself to the form which thought assumes in his day. But that it was not that which was most agreeable to himself, we may conclude from the circumstance that far the greater part of his comments belong to the other class.

This, which we may call the *devotional* method, sought to feed and fill the soul with the Divine word, to present a material to the ruminative faculty. The other addressed itself to the intellect, this to faith. It neglected the historical sense, a view of Scripture which it considered Jewish. "If once," says S. Bernard, "thou couldst taste ever so slightly of that 'finest wheat flour,'<sup>1</sup> wherewith Jerusalem is filled, how willingly wouldst thou leave the Jewish literal interpreters to gnaw their crusts alone!"<sup>2</sup> Not that it set aside the historical sense, much less considered it untrue; but it looked on the acts and circumstances of the persons described as done by themselves, and ordered by Providence, with an express reference to the acts of Christ, and the circumstances of his body, the Church, as regulated more by the laws of the unseen, than by those of the material world, the world of time and space. This sense is only to be understood by those whose sight was purged by austere life. It is the wisdom which S. Paul spoke "among them that are perfect." To those whose hearts are absorbed in the world, it seems folly and

<sup>9</sup> Subtiliter secundum modum scholasticæ lectionis exponens. Henricus Gandav.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. cxlvii. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Quam libenter suas crustas rodendas literatoribus Judæis relinques! Ep. 106. ad Hen. Murdach.

fatuity. Relish for mystical exposition is the sure test of the spiritual mind.

As the other class of commentaries was addressed to the universities, so this was addressed to the monks. They were written chiefly for the use of the cloister. No part of Scripture furnished a more rich subject for devout meditation than the Song of Solomon ; none was more frequently and copiously commented on,—the very book which has most signally foiled modern expounders : to this Ecclesiastes and Proverbs were an introduction, as more belonging to practical life. “The words of Ecclesiastes,” says S. Bernard, in the beginning of his Sermons on Canticles, “have, by God’s grace, instructed you to know and condemn the vanity of this world. Your life and manners are sufficiently formed and disciplined by the teaching of the Book of Proverbs. Draw near now to this third kind of food, that ye may prove the more excellent things.”

Not that the other books were unsuited for this purpose. “Yea, all the prophets, from Samuel, as many as have spoken, have foretold of these days.” “But,” says Bede,<sup>3</sup> “if in these books we are careful to follow out only the bare literal sense, as did the Jews, what reproof shall we receive amid daily sins ! what consolation amid the gathering afflictions of life ! what spiritual doctrine for our guidance through this tangled web ! When, opening the Book of Samuel, for instance, we read that Elkanah had two wives, we, whose resolve is to keep ourselves in the state of ecclesiastical life far from the embrace of a wife, how shall we learn aught from this, and the like accounts, I say, unless we know how to extract from them the allegoric sense,

<sup>3</sup> Exp. in Sam. Præf.

which refreshes us, by rebuking, instructing, consoling us ?”

Langton's Commentaries belong mostly to this class. They are the meditations of a mystical mind, addressed to mystics ; a recluse writing for recluses. This character appears also in their being confined to the Old Testament. We do not find anything on the New Testament attributed to him. In the New, as being of itself Christian, the literal sense must be more prominent ; while the Old, if not made Christian by allegory, is, after all, no more than Jewish history. A richness beyond what is common, in his application of parallel passages, is also remarkable. He shews a familiarity with all the less studied parts of the prophetical and apocryphal books, which would well fall in with the account that it was he who first made the division of the Bible into chapters. For such a plan would only originate with a view to a concordance ; and the earliest Concordances were arrangements of parallel passages, dictionaries of the sense, not the words, of Scripture.

It is hard to suppose that one of such an ascetic spirit as these Commentaries evince, should have afterwards been absorbed in the vain pursuits of ambition. It is much more likely, that in struggling for the Charter he was acting from a sense of the duties which his office required of him. Indeed we know, that in later years he thought of giving up his see, and entering a Carthusian monastery, or even of embracing a hermit's life.<sup>4</sup> While archbishop he abstained from eating flesh, at least in public ;<sup>5</sup> “so that,” adds Giraldus, who is

<sup>4</sup> *Anachoriticam solitudinem aut heremiticam, aut Cartusienis carceris austeritatem eligeris.* Girald. Ep. ad Steph. Langton.

<sup>5</sup> *Id. de Statu Menev. Eccles.*

drawing a comparison between him and his great predecessor, "if he did not, like Thomas, expose his life to the swords of the wicked in defence of the Church, it was only because in his case there was no necessity urging him to do so." S. Edmund's recollection of him again at Pontigny may be considered a testimony to his saintliness. However, it is not in this light that he was regarded by the Church. All who mention him draw rather attention to his learning. Gregory IX. describes him as "Stephen of worthy memory, a man preeminently endowed with the gifts of science, and the gifts of grace that come from above."<sup>6</sup> "A most eminent teacher of theology."<sup>7</sup> "Resplendent both in life and science."<sup>8</sup> "At the court of Rome was none greater than he; no, nor his equal in virtue and knowledge."<sup>9</sup> "A good clerk, and of high clergy."<sup>1</sup> These are specimens of the way in which he was spoken of by his contemporaries.

2. The historical writings ascribed to him were probably composed after his return to England. A History of the reign of King Richard, which Higden professes to follow in his account of that reign;<sup>2</sup> a Life of S. Thomas of Canterbury, and a book "Of the Deeds of Mahomet," are also attributed to him.

3. His education at Paris had also made him acquainted with the productions of the French minstrels; and he sought to turn to profit the taste for vernacular poetry which was then growing. One of the earliest miracle

<sup>6</sup> Ep. Greg. ap. Wend. iv.    <sup>7</sup> Albericus.    <sup>8</sup> Emon. Chron.

<sup>9</sup> Matt. Par.

<sup>1</sup> Boins clers est, et de haute clergie. Chron. Norm.

<sup>2</sup> Cujus mores et actus Stephanus Cantuariensis luculenter descripsit. . . . Libellum Stephani cursim studui deflorare. vii.

plays is considered to be his,<sup>3</sup> — a theological drama, in which Truth, Justice, Mercy, and Peace debate what ought to be the fate of Adam after his fall. It is written in Norman-French. Also a canticle on the Passion of Christ, of more than six hundred verses. A sermon (Latin) of his also remains, which consists of an application to the Blessed Virgin of part of a song or romance, (in French,) which we may suppose to have been popular at the time and well known to his hearers.

We return to the course of the narrative.

<sup>3</sup> By M. de la Rue (*Archæol.* xxvi.), but without sufficient evidence. Mr. Price (notes to Warton ii. 28) considers it a dramatic disposition of a later poem called “Chakour d’Amour.”

## CHAPTER V.

THE Excommunication had now been in force for three years, and John yet made light of it. There was one final measure to be tried, and Innocent had now paused long enough before having recourse to it. Let us not imagine that this was hesitation from indecision or fear. This forbearance of punishment is a peculiar feature of the papal government, and was never more remarkably displayed than by those popes who were most able to inflict it. They manifest a divine patience worthy of the highest power, the representative of that righteous Judge, who is "strong and patient, and provoked every day." They move as under the awful consciousness that their acts will be ratified in heaven.

At the close of 1212, the bishops of London and Ely accompanied the archbishop to Rome, and represented strongly at the Holy See the desolation and ruin to which the kingdom was brought. It was not only the suffering of so many innocent persons, clergy and laity, the affliction of a considerable part of the Church, that called loudly on the father and guardian of the Church for aid ; but a public scandal to the whole of Christendom, an evil example to the other princes, and a rank offence to all Christian nations. England was fast becoming a heathen country; Christianity and the teachers of it were proscribed ; even common justice, humanity, *and right* were violated : and of all this the king was *the sole cause*.

A formal sentence was accordingly given by the Holy See, pronouncing John deposed from the throne of England, and empowering Innocent to provide a more worthy successor.

The deposition of a sovereign for misgovernment is always a violent measure ; and the deposition of John, though all England concurred, and all Christian princes approved, was still a revolution. Revolutions have no rules ; but this was as far as possible effected in course of law, and by the only authority that could pretend to any right herein. The pope was then held to be the executive of the law of nations. We are quite familiar with such powers as wielded by secular congresses in modern Europe ; and the living generation has seen an assembly of diplomatists dispose of provinces and peoples, pronounce the *dechéance* of some monarchs, and replace them by others with lavish liberality and uncontrolled power. In the times we write of, monarchy by right Divine had never been heard of ; nay, rather, as Gregory VII. said, "The empire seemed to have been founded by the devil, while the priesthood was of God." But John had not even hereditary right to plead ; he was but a successful usurper : and those who consider the necessity of the case to have justified the measure of 1688, will vindicate the right of the nation in 1213 to call to the throne a grand-daughter of Henry II. in place of a prince who was overturning the laws and religion of his realm.

Such is the political aspect of the case, stated in modern language. It is very certain, however, that Innocent III. in giving, and Christendom in receiving, the sentence of deposition, assumed higher ground than this ; and that was the obligation, held sacred by *that age*, of maintaining, by the sword if need were,



Christianity against its oppressors, infidel or heretic. "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king over Israel."<sup>3</sup> On this principle war against John became a crusade, and all privileges granted to crusaders were attached to such as should take part in it.

And worse than an infidel he might well be thought by one who considered the events of the last six years. But though it was not generally known at the time, nor till many years later, John had made an express, formal offer to renounce the Christian faith. Doubts have been entertained of the truth of the story, from its being one of the later interpolations in the old chronicle of S. Alban's. Critics, however, have vindicated its authenticity on critical grounds; intrinsic probability is entirely in its favour. A Plantagenet, an Angevin, and son of a princess of Guienne, all John's attachments were to the south—that debateable ground where a degenerate Christianity had ceased to strive with an equally accommodating Moslemism and Judaism. The southern mind then entirely wanted the stern orthodoxy of northern Europe. When in a moment of desperation Philip Augustus exclaimed, "Happy Saladin, who has no pope to interfere with him!" we rightly regard it as the transient outbreak of impatience and vexation. John's embassy to the Emir al Mounemim is a much more deliberate act. Nor again was it, like Francis I.'s alliance with Solymán the Magnificent, which so shocked the religious sense of Christendom, a merely political league, in which, for their mutual interest, the two parties consented to forget their differences of religion. The Saracen emir was making rapid

<sup>3</sup> 1 Sam. xv. 23.

conquests in Spain, and John would have been glad to have been aided by the strong arm, to whomever it might belong. But more rapid than the sword was the silent growth of Oriental, if not Mahometan, religion in these regions. To this secret tendency to a libertinism of opinion, as well as of practice, may be ascribed much of John's fondness for the men of Poitou and Guienne. He was at home with them: they would completely understand the point of many a sarcasm against the clergy which would be lost upon an Englishman. And how significant in this view the care of the legate Nicholas afterwards to force the king to issue a writ to the seneschal of Gascony for the extirpation of heretics in that province!<sup>4</sup>

Nothing is more painful to the historian than the air of apology which the necessity of commenting on acts of past times is apt to assume. It does not need that one have a Catholic bias, but only that one have not the anti-catholic bias, to see that such acts of popes as the one in question are no far-fetched, high-flown usurpations, but only the natural, inevitable results of a public and established Christianity. It is simply an error against the truth of history to speak of the deposition and subjection of John, as has been done, as "an extraordinary transaction." Not only had it, in practice, as much precedent as the nature of the case admitted, but it was the legitimate and consequential application to the particular case of the general principles of the Church which all Catholics allow, and whose operation in that direction has now ceased, only because Christendom has ceased to be. Indeed, our sentiments on this matter are part of the great

<sup>4</sup> Rot. Claus., Nov. 20, 1214.

moral heresy of modern times. Power, according to the modern doctrine, is founded on the moral law. All power which spurns at, or which would emancipate itself from, the moral law, in fact abdicates—becomes noxious to a society of which morality is the rule, and must be put down by that society. Our Europe once was as much at accord as to what was Christianity, as it now is as to what is morality. Are there not symptoms of a third Babel which shall break up this last bond of agreement?

In entrusting the execution of the sentence to the king of France, Innocent selected both an able and a willing agent.

Philip Augustus (1180—1223) was the first monarch of his age. At fifteen years of age he found himself on the throne of a kingdom circumscribed in extent, and wedged in between the dominions of far more powerful sovereigns. The earls of Champagne and Flanders, the count of Toulouse, above all the king of England, lord of the whole coast from Picardy to the Pyrenees, looked down on the poor king of two or three small provinces. The commencement of his reign saw him struggling with some of his own petty vassals, who lived by robbery, and whose strongholds, posted all round it, kept Paris in a state of continual blockade. "One might venture as far beyond the walls as S. Denis; but further than this none durst ride without lance in rest, through the gloomy and perilous forest of Montmorency. In the other direction, the tower of Montlhery exacted a toll. Between his town of Orleans and his town of Paris the king could only travel with an army at his back."<sup>5</sup> In *thirty* years he had humbled his own vassals, trebled his

<sup>5</sup> Michelet, iii. 17.

dominions, shewn himself a match for Richard, wrested from John every foot of land he possessed on the Continent ; and now, in a parliament at Soissons, proposed to his barons to follow in the steps of William the Bastard, and achieve a second conquest and partition of England. Stephen Langton appeared before them, and produced the bull which he had brought from Rome. The announcement was received with enthusiasm. This was the Monday after Palm Sunday, the anniversary of the Interdict ; and on the octave of Easter they were appointed to have their men ready. The rendezvous was Rouen.

The enterprize, however, promised to be no easy conquest, to judge from John's vigorous measures for meeting it. All the military tenants in the kingdom were required, as they loved the king, themselves, and their property, to present themselves at Dover after Easter, under the penalty of "culvertage."<sup>6</sup> All others in the realm capable of bearing arms, though neither bound by their tenures nor able to provide themselves with arms, were to be armed and paid out of the exchequer. Every vessel capable of holding six horses, in all the ports of the kingdom, was seized for the king's use, and ordered to Portsmouth. All the markets were to be suspended in the towns, and to follow the camp. It gives a great idea of the despotic power of the crown, and the energy of John's administration, to find that the whole male population of the realm were gathered on the coast of Kent. This was in behalf of an excommunicate king at open war with the whole Church. And yet we are apt to fancy that the power of the Church and clergy in those days was inordinate. They formed a multitude so much greater than the neighbourhood had the means of

<sup>6</sup> Turn-tail.

supporting, that the unarmed rabble were immediately dismissed. There yet remained sixty thousand men of the several species of force, ready equipped for service. This imposing array mustered on Barham Down, close to Canterbury; "a multitude sufficient," says the annalist, "had they been united with one heart and spirit to their king, to have made good his cause against any prince in the world."<sup>7</sup>

But John was not without allies on the Continent; for there is no man so abandoned, no cause so bad, as not to find defenders, so long as it seems to prosper. Reginald count of Boulogne, a turbulent prince of a petty territory, expelled from France by Philip, was of great service in gaining many lords in the Low Countries. Ferdinand earl of Flanders, Theobald earl of Bar, the duke of Limbourg, the duke of Louvain, the viscount of Thouars, and William earl of Holland, promised or sent succours.

It was a feeble instrument that God made use of to defeat this mighty outfit. But, with a bad conscience within, the feeblest foe becomes formidable. The bishops, the pope, the Interdict, the Excommunication — John had defied them all: the words of a poor rustic reached his conscience, and his resolution all at once failed him.

In the neighbourhood of Pontefract in Yorkshire, a burgh belonging to the great baron Roger de Lasci, the constable of Chester, there lived a simple rustic, by name Peter. He led the life of a hermit, on bread and water. In his own neighbourhood he had the reputation of being a "wise man;" and he was resorted to by the country folk for the benefit of his fore, or second,

<sup>7</sup> Wend.

sight. Soon he began to take a wider range ; and he became obnoxious to John "for that he had warned him of many myshappes that hym sholde fall for hys cruelnesse, and for hys fornycacyon . . . . Cryst appeared twice to thys Pyers at Yorke, and ones at Pontfret, and taughte hym many thynges that he told afterwarde to byshoppes and people that were of evyl lyfe. Also in a tyme he laye thre dayes and thre nyghtes as he were in swownying, and was ravished, and sawe the joyes and paynes of good men and of evyl."<sup>8</sup> And now he gave out that John would cease to be king on Ascension Day next ; for that it had been revealed to him in a vision that John would reign for fourteen years, during which he would succeed in all he undertook. John had been crowned on Ascension Day 1199, the fourteen years then expired on Ascension Day 1213.

This prophecy was much bruited about in the north, where it made a great impression. It was at last taken up by the great people, for the northern barons were always the most disaffected to the king. Soon after, John happened to be in that part of the country, on his return from an abortive expedition against Wales. Provoked by new aggressions of the Welsh, he had set out with a large army, determined to exterminate the whole nation. He stopped on his way at Nottingham Castle, where the Welsh hostages were kept ; and, before sitting down to meat, had twenty-eight youths, sons of the first Welsh chiefs, hung before his eyes. During the repast, which followed, came a courier from the king of Scotland, discovering a conspiracy formed against him among the barons ; and at the very same time came in a messenger from Wales, secretly despatched by his

\* Trevisa's Higden.

daughter,<sup>9</sup> who was married to Llewellyn. He said he brought letters of secret tenor and great import. No business with John ever interfered with the business of the table ; but as soon as his appetite was satisfied he retired, and found, to his consternation, that the letters coming from such opposite quarters agreed in revealing the existence of a widely-spread conspiracy against him. The hermit's prophecy, concurring with this, made a deep impression upon him. He gave up the expedition, and returned in haste to London. But he left special orders to seek out the hermit, and bring him to him. When he came into his presence, the king demanded if he meant that he should die on the day named. The hermit answered, that was beyond his knowledge ; all he knew was, that he should cease to be king on that day, and that he was willing to abide any penalty if it were not so. He was accordingly handed over to Harcourt, the governor of Corfe ; in its fatal dungeon, from which so few emerged alive, to wait the result. This very imprisonment gave vogue and currency to his prediction, which raised no little ferment in men's minds.

Fear had brought his vassals round him, but John knew that he could not depend on their fidelity. Perhaps too, in his extremity, he wished to fall into the hands of God rather than into those of men. He was lodged at the house of the Knights Templars near Dover, when word was brought him that Pandulph, the legate, was on the other side of the Channel, and solicited an audience. John desired he would come to him without delay. Pandulph represented to him that his

<sup>9</sup> Joan, by some wrongly called John's sister. See Higden *Polychronicon*, MS. ; Hundred Rolls, ii. 91.

final chastisement was now imminent ; that the king of France lay in the Seine, with a force which, with his disaffected vassals, he could not hope to resist ; that the very nobles who surrounded him had pledged themselves to Philip, under their own hands and seals, and tendered him their homage. But it was not yet too late, repentance and submission would still save him.

He yielded, and swore on the book of the Gospels to submit himself faithfully to the judgment of the Church. Sixteen barons became surety for his fulfilment of his engagement : if he retracted, they were to compel him by force. The substance of this agreement was as follows :—“The king pledges himself under oath, that the bishops, and all other persons, lay or clerical, implicated in the present affair, shall be forgiven, and received and retained *bonâ fide* in his favour ; that he will not hurt nor suffer others to hurt them, nor disturb them in the full exercise of their functions and jurisdiction. He will send them letters of safe-conduct before their coming over. He will restore the lands belonging to their churches, and give full compensation for all waste and damage ; as a first instalment whereof, he will pay down 8000*l.* sterling, to be divided among the archbishop, bishops, and the convent of Canterbury, in several rates and proportions. That he will set at liberty all clergy at present in his prisons, and all laymen who had been imprisoned on this matter. That he will recall the Interdict, or act of outlawry, which he had enacted against divers ecclesiastical persons ; making at the same time, by letters patent, a renunciation of any such right or power against ecclesiastics.”

*This agreement was entered into on Monday the 13th of May. The 16th was Ascension Day, the fatal term*



fixed by Peter of Pontefract. On the vigil of that day, in a second meeting with the legate, in the presence of the chief nobility of the realm, John executed a deed resigning the crown of England to the pope, and received one in return from the legate, by which he was to hold it as a vassal of the Holy See. "John, by the grace of God, &c. to all the faithful in Christ, &c. We would have it known to you all by this charter confirmed by our seal, that, whereas we have in many things offended God and our mother the Holy Church, and therefore stand much in need of Divine mercy; and whereas we have nothing that we can worthily offer to make due satisfaction to God and the Church; we, willing to humble ourselves for Him who humbled Himself for us even unto death, the grace of the Holy Ghost moving us, and not by force or compulsion of the Interdict, but of our own free will, and by the advice of our assembled barons, do make over freely to God, and his holy apostles Peter and Paul, to the Holy Roman Church our mother, to the lord pope Innocent and his Catholic successors, the whole realms both of England and Ireland, with all the rights belonging thereto, for the remission of our sins, and those of our family living and dead, to receive and to hold the said realms henceforth of him, and of the Church of Rome as its liegeman. . . . In token of this our obligation and grant for ever, we will and appoint, that out of the rents of the aforesaid kingdoms to us belonging, and in lieu of all service and custom which we are bound to do for them (saving the payment of the pennies of the blessed Peter), we will pay to the Roman Church yearly 3000 marks sterling, saving to us and our heirs our rights, *liberties*, and royalties."

*This act is witnessed on the king's part by the arch-*

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bishop of Dublin, the bishop of Norwich, Fitz-Peter the justiciary, and ten other barons, including such as had all through most warmly espoused the king's cause. This was followed by the usual act of homage done by liegemen to their lords.

Such a surrender was not uncommon in that age. It was an act of piety and humility, the visible homage of temporal power to spiritual, the confession of princes that the powers that be are ordained of God, in the true sense of that text—self-renunciation in a princely shape. To John it was also an act of penance: as a prince he had sinned, as a prince therefore ought he to repent, and he thus accepted, and acknowledged the justice of, the sentence of deposition. What degree of sincerity there may have been, we cannot judge. From time to time, throughout, and on his deathbed especially, he shewed a desire to be reconciled to that Heaven against which he had so grievously sinned. But it is undoubtedly true, that on this occasion the step he took was demanded by his interest. Nothing short of the surrender of the crown to the Holy See could in all probability have arrested the French invasion.

The feast of Ascension was waited for by the king in anxious suspense, in which not only his army, but the whole kingdom shared. The royal tent was erected in the centre of the plain, and heralds made public invitation to the multitudes to join the king in celebrating the feast. And with rejoicings and festivities they kept it, the king enjoying himself in company with the bishops and great lords.<sup>1</sup> But his deliverance inspired no feeling of gratitude. No sooner was the fatal day safely past, than he determined to revenge himself on

<sup>1</sup> *Oblectante se et exhilarante cum episcopis et proceribus.*  
*Cont. Hov.*

the cause of his alarm. A messenger was despatched to Corfe, and the hermit and his son were taken from their dungeon, dragged at the tails of horses to Wareham the nearest borough, that their punishment might be more public, and there hanged, as false prophets;—unjustly so, so judged the wiser part, who said, that, if the events of the preceding days were rightly considered, they would be found to be a complete fulfilment of the prediction.

The legate had succeeded with one king, but a difficult task still remained with the other. He recrossed the Channel, and bore the news to Philip that John had submitted, and that his interference was therefore unnecessary. But Philip was not to be so baulked. He had spared neither time, treasure, nor pains to bring that host together, at the pope's bidding; and, now that the prize was within his reach, it was snatched from him, and he was treated as a mere tool of the pope's to frighten the king of England into submission. Would the pope even reimburse him the sixty thousand pounds he had embarked in the speculation? This is the evil of enlisting, on grounds of interest, men of the world to serve the cause of the Church. And, to say the truth, notwithstanding Philip's present good disposition towards the Church, he would not have been stayed in this matter, but for the earl of Flanders. He instantly refused to follow in what, he said, would now be an unjust enterprize. The truth was, the earl had been gained over by John, and was in secret treaty with him. "Quit my court," cried the king, "and, by all the Saints in France I swear, either Flanders shall become France, or France Flanders!" This invasion of Flanders furnished an object *for his arms*, and diverted him from England.

And now the exiles might return. The archbishop and bishops, and a whole crowd of clergy and laity, who had drawn towards the coast to wait the issue of the invasion, now embarked for England, scarcely believing yet the restoration which God had wrought for them, and landed at Dover on the 16th of July. The king had already left it, but they followed him to Winchester. As the little troop of exiles entered that ancient Saxon capital, they were met by the king himself. In the sight of all he threw himself at the archbishop's feet, and with abundance of tears begged for mercy for himself and his kingdom. These happy signs of sincerity and genuine contrition moved the bishops to tears of joy and sympathy, and, raising him from the ground, they placed themselves on either side of him, and in this order proceeded to the door of the cathedral, chanting the fiftieth psalm. Here he was solemnly absolved from the Excommunication, in the open air; all the people standing round, and the iron-hearted nobles weeping at the sight. The doors of the church were then thrown open to the royal penitent, and the archbishop conducted him in. Mass was celebrated in his presence for the first time after many years. After this, he sat down to table with the archbishop and bishops in much gladness of heart and mirth.

Still, all was not settled; the question of restitution was big with the elements of dispute. Letters were sent round to the sheriffs, summoning a jury of five lawful men, with a foreman, to appear at S. Alban's on the 4th of August, to assess on oath the compensation due to the clergy. The meeting was held, but the king was not there; he was on the southern coast, preparing for an invasion of France. He was represented by the *bishop of Winchester*, and the justiciary; but nothing

was done but to issue a proclamation against the exactions of the forest, and other officers of the king. The forest-laws themselves were severe enough, and the tyranny of those who administered them aggravated them tenfold. The king was in the habit of selling the sheriffdoms, and the sheriff consequently sold the subordinate offices ; but, however many the intermediate hands, at last the price was paid by the unhappy provincials<sup>2</sup> in fees, fines, drink-money, and under various other pretences.

A second meeting, still more fully attended, was held three weeks afterwards at Westminster. The king was again absent. This seemed ominous. The question of restitution was obliged to be again postponed. But the cry of oppression from the country-people now fixed the attention of the synod. The justiciary had been obliged to promise, the last time, in the king's name, that he would observe the laws of his grandfather Henry. This led to an inquiry what the laws of Henry I. meant. The general meaning of the promise was understood, but few perhaps knew anything more about it. To satisfy this inquiry, the archbishop now produced the charter of Henry I. He read and explained it to them. They received it with joy. Here was the very thing they wanted ; the very exactions and evil customs which most galled them now, formally renounced and repealed under the King's own seal : no mere vague, traditional "Laws and Usages of Edward the Confessor," but an explicit statute.

The importance attached to a written charter had been on the increase since Henry I.'s time. The sanctity of written law is a growth of the twelfth century.

<sup>2</sup> *Miseris provincialibus.* Cont. Hov.

Henry might have meant it at most as a declaration of the king's good pleasure for the time being, but it was now on record.<sup>3</sup> The enrolment of writs of the king's court commences with the reign of John. Hitherto there had been no copies taken, and grants and charters had to be continually renewed.<sup>4</sup> The charter was adopted with loud acclamations, and the barons took an oath before the archbishop that they would contend to the death, if need were, in behalf of these liberties.

In the midst of its deliberations the synod was alarmed by the news of the king's approach in a hostile manner, at the head of his retainers. His foreign expedition had been frustrated by the refusal of the barons to follow him. Those of Northumberland had even gone so far as to plead<sup>5</sup> that they were not bound by their feudal tenure to follow him out of England. He determined to punish the more obnoxious of the recusants. With his usual promptness and recklessness of consequences, he set off with such of his own retainers and mercenaries whom he could always draft from the garrisons of his numerous castles,<sup>6</sup> towards the north. Neglecting the assembly at London, he crossed the Thames at Wallingford, and pressed onward on the North road, which then lay through Nottingham. The archbishop followed him, and overtook him at Northampton. He reminded him that it was a violation of the oath which he had taken at his absolution, to make war on any of his liegemen, who had not been con-

<sup>3</sup> The charter of Henry I. opens the "Statutes of the Realm."

<sup>4</sup> The series of "The Charter Rolls" commences in the first of John, the "Patent Rolls" in the third, the "Close" and "Fine Rolls" in the sixth.

<sup>5</sup> *Rad. Cogg.*

<sup>6</sup> *Collectis militum copiis.* *Id.*

demned by sentence in the king's court. Though John had lately submitted to the papal legate, yet remonstrance of this nature from one of his own bishops was new to him. Gone from England, never to return, were the days in which a king would submit to the stern rebuke of a priest of God, as Alfred had submitted to S. Neot. Instead of "the smooth applause which Christian kings are accustomed to expect from their loyal prelates," here was opposition, contradiction. Was this the archbishop's gratitude for being allowed to return? With a shout of passion<sup>7</sup> he declared that he was not going to order the affairs of the realm after the archbishop's pleasure; and the next morning, with the first dawn, he was on the road to Nottingham. Thither the archbishop followed him, and by firmness and temperate remonstrances,<sup>8</sup> prevailed on him to terminate his quarrel with the Northumbrians in the regular way of proceeding by trial in the king's court.

This was in September. At the end of the month arrived Nicholas, cardinal-bishop of Frascati, with a special commission to settle all the matters in dispute between the king and the clergy. He had been despatched from Rome as soon as news of the events at Dover arrived there, and was recommended by Innocent both to the king of France, through whose territory he was to pass, and to the king of England, to whom he was to come as "an angel of health and peace." Wherever the legate was present, the Interdict was suspended for the time; and on his whole route to London, the clergy received him with processions and chaunts, and in their festival robes.

<sup>7</sup> Cum ingenti strepitu. Wend.

<sup>8</sup> Eum rationabiliter arguens. Cogg.

At Michaelmas, the king, in a great synod of the bishops and lords, met him at London. During three days, the points in dispute, and especially the restitution, were discussed. The king repeated in full assembly the act of homage, and paid the first instalment of the annual tribute, one thousand marks. He promised to reform the administration of the county courts, and to set on foot a commission of inquiry into the sums extorted in this way by the county officers ; but it came to nothing. The great difficulty was the question of restitution. The king offered, in plenary compensation, one hundred thousand marks of silver to be paid down, and if by the returns of the commission it should appear that more had been taken away, he was ready to give security that he would, before Easter, make good this to the satisfaction of the legate. To Nicholas this seemed all that could be desired, and his surprise was great to see the coldness and dissatisfaction with which the synod received the offer.

It was no doubt a large sum for the king to pay. The whole amount of the royal revenue for two years was proved by Hubert, when (1196) he resigned the office of high justiciary, to be but one million of marks. On the other hand, we may well suppose that it would be but a pitiful compensation for the waste and damage of six years, when it came to be divided among the whole number of sufferers. Not only had they been kept out of the annual produce of their lands, which had either remained untilled, or gone to those who had the custody of them ; but on their return to their homes they had found their houses and barns burnt, their serfs dispersed, their timber cut down, their herds and flocks disappeared, and their whole lands wasted by wanton *dilapidation*. This was not merely loss, but was

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prospect of actual starvation. They were returned, but only to want and destitution. The contrast, too, of the condition of such as had purchased immunity by siding with the king, aggravated the mortification. While wandering over the continent, the sympathy of brethren, the consciousness of suffering for Christ, and the hope of a happy return, supported them. The persecution was now past, they were restored, and the heart-sickening sense of desolation had succeeded to the excitement of continually renewed hope. It is easy to think that a religious ought to be indifferent to this world's goods; but the greatest part of these exiles were not religious: and the monk's objects of attachment are few, and therefore strong; and what they had lost was not the superfluities of wealth, but their all.

It must be confessed, however, that this tenacity on the part of the clergy has a very ill look. There was no principle involved. It were to be wished that, like S. Thomas, they had disdained to let money be a cause of discord, above all while the removal of the Interdict awaited the final settlement. Hence we cannot be surprised when we find the king afterwards attempting to buy off the opposition of the bishops, by offering them separately fifteen thousand marks; hoping thus to detach them from the cause of the inferior clergy.<sup>9</sup> The bishops could not give a direct refusal to the king's offer, so they proposed that the decision should be adjourned till the inquest, which was in progress, should be completed. The king readily caught at a proposal of delay, always agreeable to him,<sup>1</sup>—and the more so, as during the sitting, letters were brought from Rome requiring restitution to queen Berengaria, and Simon de Mont-

<sup>9</sup> Ann. Wav.

<sup>1</sup> Dilectam sibi dilationem. Wend.

fort, a subject from which he always made haste to escape.

Altogether the representation made by the new legate of the real state of things in England, had a great effect at Rome. Hitherto Innocent had only heard the king's cause through the medium of the king's clerks—a class not very likely to inspire much confidence. About the end of the year a crowd of English clergy presented themselves at Rome. For though the excommunicated laymen, or who had consorted with the excommunicate, were absolved by their own bishops, ecclesiastics in the same condition could have it nowhere but at Rome. John de Gray and the abbot of Beaulieu were among them. Through them the king petitioned that his person and chapels should never be subjected to an Interdict except by an immediate sentence from the pope. Not only was this granted, but in a letter to the king, Innocent prayed that in any future disagreement with his clergy, the king, instead of taking the matter roughly into his own hands, would refer at once to the Holy See, from whose bounty he might obtain more indulgence than he could by violent acts of power.<sup>2</sup>

The suspicious eye with which the English clergy began to be looked upon at Rome was further augmented by a new dispute which arose between them and the legate. During the Interdict a great many vacancies had occurred in church preferments, including bishoprics and abbeys; and part of the legate's commission had been to provide that they should, as soon as possible, be filled up. Now over and above the confusion attending the Interdict, there was an abiding tendency in the English Church to a state of things which, in the eyes of

<sup>2</sup> Inn. Ep. xvi. 130.

a papal legate, would seem simply laxity and irregularity. The canons of the Church, and the rules of religious orders, were in numberless instances set aside or modified by the peculiar habits of the people. A strict observance of the letter of the rule, not common anywhere, was hardly at any period found in an English monastery. There was a comfortable, accommodating, family way of going on, which long custom had led them to regard as the right of their church. This had its origin partly in the physical insulation of the kingdom—a fact which, with all the multiplied intercourse of modern times, still has an effect—partly in the old Saxon traditions, but chiefly in the way in which the English sovereigns, even the best, looked upon the English Church as *their* church, and the clergy as *their* clergy. In its earliest age, one of the difficulties Augustine and the Roman missionaries had to encounter was a similar feeling prevailing among the British Christians ; and all through its history there has been a secular party who have maintained laxity and licence under the garb of independence. Hence the peculiar jealousy with which clergy and people ever regarded the interference of an Italian legate, and their anxiety that that office, if exercised at all, should at least be exercised by a native bishop. It was humiliating, too, to an archbishop of Canterbury to have to lower his cross before the stranger's ; for, like the fasces of old Rome, the cross of an inferior prelate could not be borne in the presence of the superior, and all gave way before that of a legate.<sup>3</sup>

The Reformation itself, in one view, was but an exaggerated access of the hereditary malady which

<sup>3</sup> Inn. Ep. ix. 238.

had been long kept under by the moral influence of the Holy See. In the tenth and sixteenth centuries, this moral influence was next to nothing ; the disease of the centre affected the extremities, and at those two periods the world and worldly men were uppermost.

Thus when Nicholas, to whom English usages were nothing and Catholic rules everything, began to depose abbots for misgovernment,<sup>4</sup> and to fill up churches without regard to the wishes of chapters, and the private arrangements of patrons, the native clergy began to be indignant.<sup>5</sup> There were the old charges ; he ordained unfit persons, preferred the king's clerks or his own chaplains.

Unhappily there was too much room for recrimination. They pointed sarcastically to a train of fifty knights, and a long retinue of servants who attended him, and which he had acquired in England. The entertainment to which a legate had a right from the clergy wherever he went, was at all times felt as a burden, but it was ruinous when fifty knights were to be lodged and fed. Still more than the tax on their stores, good men felt the inconsistency of such pomp with the office. With what effect could one, who overnight entered the abbey he was to visit in princely state, and required all the luxuries of a court for his own use, the next day in chapter rebuke the brethren for exceeding their rule, and recall them to their sackcloth and two dishes a day ? When in 1204 Innocent sent three legates to endeavour to stem the torrent of heresy in the south of France, they moved from city to city with their rich equipage of

<sup>4</sup> Westminster, Evesham, Bardon.

<sup>5</sup> *Timebant sibi arbores qui inutiliter locum regiminis occupabant.* Cont. Hov.

servitors, fine horses, and rich clothes. They preached, and held everywhere formal disputations to confute the heretics; they might do so, but the heresy grew and spread daily. They were in despair, and thought of resigning their mission. At Montpellier they fell in by accident with two Spanish travellers. One of them was a bishop. "We know something of this country," he said to them, "and you will never convert this people by words. Your example does more harm than your preaching does good. It is the luxury of churchmen that is their great argument against your religion. Send away your retinue, rid yourselves of your baggage, and oppose the humility of true religion to their false sanctity."

However, the legate Nicholas went on his way in despite of the opposition, and the complaints of the clergy. Some appealed to Rome, but the legate who knew his ground well, and that he was not exceeding legatine powers, suspended them. The archbishop was urged by his clergy to resist what they felt as an usurpation. In January, 1214, he summoned his suffragans to meet him at Dunstaple. From this place he sent two of his clerks to the legate, who was at Burton-on-Trent, to announce that he had appealed to Rome, and forbade him, pending the appeal, to institute clerks into the vacant churches within his province, contrary to the rights and honour of the see of Canterbury. The legate paid no attention to this, but proceeded as before. He sent, however, Pandulph to Rome to vindicate his conduct to the pope. The archbishop made choice of his brother, Simon Langton, for his envoy.

Thus Innocent was called on for an exercise of judgment in one of those difficult cases so often presented to the Holy See—that of deciding between two opposi-

statements made by men who, by station, character, and experience, were both equally entitled to credence. The legate gave the highest accounts of John's dispositions and sincerity. He declared he had never seen a prince so humble and moderate, while the bishops were too covetous and exacting in the matter of the restitution, and shewed an inclination to rob the crown of its just prerogatives. Langton, on the other hand, had to urge that the legate had been gained by the king; that he was, in secret, bartering away the liberties of the English Church, unjustly invading the rights of nations, and only careful to provide for his own family and clerks.

We have no means of deciding in this quarrel where the blame, or most of it, lay. The decision of the Holy See was no doubt founded on as full a view of the case as could be had. No time was lost in fixing the amount to be paid by the king. The claims of the bishops, which had been sent to Rome, having been examined, their indemnity was limited to one hundred thousand marks. But not to postpone the removal of the Interdict, they were to be content with forty thousand paid down, including the sums already received, and the remaining sixty thousand were to be paid by half-yearly instalments of six thousand marks.<sup>6</sup> Innocent delicately reminded the archbishop that he had already, in many things, exceeded his powers—among others, by venturing to relax the Interdict in the royal chapels, and to celebrate in the king's presence; but that he would pass over this violation of order out of his regard for the freedom of the bishops, which he was unwilling should even seem to be trespassed on. On the other hand, the

<sup>6</sup> Wend. compared with Inn. Ep. xiv. 16A.

legate received so severe a rebuke for the conduct complained of, that he thought it necessary to return to Rome with all speed.

He did not take his departure, however, till he had recalled the Interdict. About the 1st of July<sup>7</sup> (1214) he summoned the bishops, abbots, barons, and all others concerned in the matter, to London. The restitution was arranged agreeably to the papal award. It was found, however, that even of the sum of forty thousand marks to be paid down, fifteen thousand were not forthcoming. For this, however, the bishops consented to accept the bond of the bishops of Winchester and Norwich, who were absent themselves, having followed the king to Poitou. And then at last, to the great joy of all men, in the church of S. Paul, the legate solemnly removed the Interdict, after it had continued six years, three months, and fourteen days. The aisles of old S. Paul's, so long silent, echoed to the notes of the *Te Deum*, and the bells, that had so long hung mute, proclaimed the happy event to the city and neighbourhood.

Such settlements, after a great convulsion, always leave some wrongs unrighted. Though the exiles had been compensated, those who stayed behind, and had obeyed the Interdict, had also been in no small degree sufferers. The legate had not quitted the synod, when there appeared before him an innumerable multitude of religious of every condition: abbots, abbesses, priors, Templars, and Hospitallers, laying before him all they had suffered in limb and property by the ill treatment of the king's officers. The legate could do nothing for them; he was compelled to reply, that his instructions

<sup>7</sup> *Die apostolorum Petri et Pauli*; Wend. *Crastino Processi et Martiniani*; Wav. Dunstap.

made no mention of them or their claim ; and that their only remedy was to apply to the Holy See itself.

Peace, however, seemed now restored to the English Church, and the whole kingdom. The religious might be content to forget their past losses in the prospect of serving God in quiet the remainder of their lives. But the momentary appearance of tranquillity was deceitful, and a severer storm than that now passed over was at hand. We have already seen it lowering in the distance.



## CHAPTER VI.

It is well known, that the one great object of the Great Charter was the protection of the barons, or tenants in chief of the crown. To define what was undefined, to regulate what had hitherto been arbitrary in the feudal system, and to limit the claims of the crown on its tenants, is its principal business. Two other classes, however, are comprehended in its benefits:—


1. The rights and liberties granted by the king to his own vassals were extended to the subvassals, including the inhabitants of cities and boroughs, who were sometimes the vassals, or “men” of the king, but oftener of some lord, or great monastery.
2. The clergy, the bishops and abbots, as holders of fiefs, participated in the liberties granted to such. But the very first clause of the Charter concerned the Church itself, whose well-being was the common interest of all, and did not concern ecclesiastics only. It secured the right of free election to the chapters. “The English Church<sup>s</sup> shall be free, and shall have her whole rights and liberties inviolable; and we will that this be so observed. And that such is our pleasure appears from this, that the freedom of elections, which was reputed most requisite for the English Church, we did, of our mere and free will, before the quarrel between ourselves and our barons, grant, and by our charter confirm, and did obtain

<sup>s</sup> *Anglicana ecclesia libera sit.*

the confirmation of the same from our Lord Pope Innocent III. ; the same we will ourselves observe, and we will the same to be observed by our heirs for ever."

Excepting the villains, then, every class of society was united in this movement against the king, and the liberties of every class were concentrated. And the villains were not overlooked or omitted, as of no importance, but because in the political system of that time they had no place. Not being "*legales homines*," the Charter, which was a legal act, could not take cognizance of them. Their good treatment depended on the character of the holder of the fief, and was a private duty, of moral and religious, not legal, obligation. This might, then, be a defect in the system, but it is no defect in the Charter, which proposed to restore, not to revolutionise that system.

Thus unanimously called for by the whole nation, and allowed by the monarchs themselves to be equitable, and having for their object simply the putting on record, the making statute, of what had hitherto been custom, and thus putting a limit to exactions which, under pretext of a vague custom, were continually creeping onwards ; it is no wonder that the provisions of the Charter should have been eagerly embraced by the clergy. They saw only the misery and disorder caused by the anarchy into which the existing system, uncorrected, had, in the lapse of time, degenerated. An act of violence or oppression committed at the top of the feudal scale was sure, sooner or later, to descend upon the tillers of the ground ; whoever were the gainers, they were inevitably the sufferers. And when the farmer or the serf suffered, his complaint was carried to the priest of his parish, who alone would sympathise, or perhaps understand his language.



In thus sanctioning and seconding the attempt of the barons, the English clergy overlooked two important points in the case :—1. That even supposing the limits they proposed to set to the king's power to be ever so just and necessary, they were parties, not judges, and that by the recognised law of Christendom the case ought to have been referred to the Holy See for a judicial sentence. 2. That in "moving war" against their lord, the barons were violating the first principle of that very system to which they professed to be appealing, and committing the greatest public crime that a vassal could commit.

These observations were necessary to explain what seems so surprising at first view, that Innocent, who so firmly carried through the late struggle in behalf of Langton against the king, is now found supporting the king, and condemning the archbishop and barons.

It is needless to go through all the steps by which the barons endeavoured to compass the object they had now proposed to themselves,—the confirmation, namely, of the Charter of Henry I. Their slow, timorous indecision contrasts strongly with the active, unhesitating energy of John. They were afraid of the king. Wonderful as this seems, when we find him returning to England after his whole party on the Continent had been broken by the defeat at Bovines (July 27), to see himself equally deserted by the English nobility. He kept his Christmas court at Worcester (1215), but it was blank and deserted, and before the day was over, the king had left the city. While he was resisting the Church, they had thronged around him, in spite of the excommunication; now he was reconciled to the Church, and they shunned him. His partiality to his countrymen sealed his unpopularity. He employed and trusted

them alone. Peter de Roches had been made justiciary, and he was a Poitevin.

“Hoc nocuit Lamiarum cæde madenti.”

But though he seemed forsaken by all, they feared him ; they feared his foreign troops, of whom he had still many in his garrisons. All through the contest, we can see the superiority of the foreigners in arms. Still more they feared his personal character. An utterly unscrupulous man is always formidable. And now, too, they knew that they were in the wrong, and that their present enterprise accordingly was opposed by the pope ; and they were afraid of one another. Living always isolated and independent in their several castles, pursuing singly their selfish ends, each man for himself, the feudal lords had always great difficulty in confederating for any purpose ; each one hung back, waiting for his neighbour to declare himself first. They had meeting after meeting, and oath upon oath, before they dared trust themselves to an open declaration against a king, who seemed without a friend.

On the 7th of January he was in London at the New Temple ; and the barons presented themselves before him, with an insolent display of their armed retainers,<sup>1</sup> and demanded the Charter of Henry I. Resistance was useless, and the king requested delay till Easter. The interval he spent in endeavouring to gain friends and support in various ways. He caused the oath of fidelity, and the homage to himself, to be renewed throughout the kingdom. “Moved by fear, rather than devotion,”<sup>2</sup> he took the cross for the crusade against the heretics of the south, which was then being preached

<sup>1</sup> *In lascivo satis apparatu militari.* Wend.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

with great zeal both in England and France. In this extremity he voluntarily renounced the claim or abuse of nomination to church dignities—a usurpation which the Norman monarchs cherished among their most valuable prerogatives. He granted a charter to this effect to all conventual and collegiate churches, saving only to the crown the right of custody during vacancy, and the grant of leave to proceed to election. This charter was sent to Rome immediately for ratification, and being accepted there as the final termination of the long dispute, confirmed Innocent in his opinion of the king's sincerity, and his disposition to support him. The liberty thus granted was not a dead letter, for several abbeys which had lain vacant since the Interdict immediately availed themselves of it, and for once exercised, without dispute, the right of free choice of their head.<sup>3</sup>

But the barons persevered. Easter came. The king kept it at Woodstock and Oxford, but his court was thin; and, worst of all, he could not depend even on those who shewed themselves. The earls of Pembroke, Chester, Warenne, and others, remained, but rather for the purpose of using their influence in favour of the confederates, than to support John against them. The archbishop in particular had a difficult part to act. Anxious for the charter, he remained with the king, and did his utmost to induce him to grant it. Nearly the whole baronage of the kingdom in arms, with their retainers, advanced to Brackley, within twenty miles of Oxford. The king sent the archbishop and the earl of Pembroke, and desired to know, "What were the laws and liberties which they sought?" They produced a paper, the heads of which were reported to the king by the archbishop. "And why," said he, with a scornful

<sup>3</sup> Chron. Dunst.

laugh, "do they not ask my kingdom also?" and swore he would never grant them liberties which would make him a slave.

On receiving this answer, they appealed openly to force. They defied the king,<sup>4</sup> and renounced their homage, and erecting themselves and followers into the "Army of God and the Holy Church," gave the command of it to Robert Fitzwalter. Fitzwalter had fled into France in 1212, having become an object of suspicion to John, but had been reconciled to him in the following way :—When the truce with Philip was concluded, after the battle of Bovines, a tournament was held in presence of the two monarchs. In the first course, the English champion, who concealed his name, rode down his French antagonist, horse and man ; on which John swore, "by God's teeth, he deserves to be a king who has such a soldier in his train !" The knight was Fitzwalter, and his friends seized the fortunate moment, and reconciled him to the king, who gave him the castle of Hereford to hold. But he was one of the most active in organizing the confederacy, having, if popular tradition may be trusted, private as well as public grounds of hostility to John.<sup>5</sup>

The king had no force with him ; but their object was not his person, but his castles. These strongholds covered the country in every direction ; and being garrisoned by trained soldiers, under the command of foreigners, were impregnable to a mere feudal force unprovided with engines. Fifteen days were accord-

<sup>4</sup> Regem diffiduciantes. Cont. Hov.

<sup>5</sup> Among other crimes fixed on John by doubtful tradition is the poisoning of Maud, Fitzwalter's daughter ; *vid.* Ritson's *Robin Hood*, p. 19.

ingly consumed in a fruitless blockade of Northampton, and the confederates were glad to cover the disgrace of their retreat by the occupation of Bedford, which was betrayed to them. Here they received a secret invitation from some of the principal citizens of London. Marching all night, they entered it in the morning of Sunday, while the forty thousand inhabitants were at mass in its one hundred and twenty churches.<sup>6</sup> Here they replenished their treasury by confiscations of the Jews and the king's adherents; the houses of the former they demolished, and employed the stones in repairing the walls of the city. The Tower was still held by the king's garrison.<sup>7</sup>

From London they sent letters to all the holders of fiefs in the kingdom who had hitherto held back, calling on them to stand with the barons for the peace and liberties of the realm. All who should refuse, they would treat as public enemies. On this, the few who still seemed to adhere to John, forsook him, and his cause became desperate. Excepting the king's foreign garrisons, the whole country north of the Thames was in open rebellion; the Court of Exchequer, and the county courts ceased; none would pay any dues, or acknowledge the king in anything. He yielded a second time, and sent to London, requesting the confederates to fix a day for the interview.

On the 18th of June, accordingly, he descended from his castle of Windsor, to a meadow that lay at its feet, along the south bank of the Thames. To this place the baronial host advanced from their quarters in the city of London. Pavilions were pitched for the king, and the principal parties of both sides, during a discussion,

<sup>6</sup> Pet. Bles., Ep. 151.

<sup>7</sup> Rad. Cogg.

which was prolonged for several days. The scene of the final ratification of the Charter is said to be a small island in the Thames, not far above Ankerwyke, in Bucks, which still bears the name of Magna Charta Island.<sup>8</sup>

Pandulph had assisted at the negotiations ; and as soon as they were concluded he was sent to Rome, to relate what had taken place. A second deputation immediately followed him, to urge the nullity of a deed extorted by violence and rebellion, and in disregard of the rights of suzerainty over the realm, which were now vested in the Holy See.

Innocent consulted the cardinals ; and on the 24th of August the ambassadors received a bull, which bore that "The king of England had in truth gravely offended against the Church, but had since turned from his evil courses, had given compensation, and had granted a full and entire liberty to the Church of England. The old enemy of man, however, had fomented new disputes between him and his barons. These had constituted themselves judges, as well as parties, in their own cause, and had risen, vassals against their lord, knights against their king, and had not scrupled to league themselves with his avowed enemies, laying waste his domains and possessing themselves, by way of treachery, of London, the seat of the kingdom. Not regarding the king's appeals to the pope, as his liege lord, his offers of submitting to arbiters to be appointed jointly by himself and the barons, and his privileges as having taken the cross, they had compelled him by force and fear to an unlawful composition, derogatory of his royal rights and prerogative. This composition and agreement being in

<sup>8</sup> Manning and Bray, *Hist. of Surrey*, iii.



itself unlawful, the pope, by the authority committed to him, therefore declares null and void."

At the same time he wrote to the barons, them "to make a virtue of necessity, and voluntarily renounce this composition, that so the king might be induced by this concession on their parts to amend his own free will, those things of which they complained. To this the pope would endeavour to move him; he was unwilling that the king should lose his crown, so he was desirous that he should cease from battling with the barons. Let them, then, during the approaching general council, send duly qualified proctors to appear before the Holy See; which, by God's good favour, would provide that all disorders and abuses be banished from the realm of England, that the king's honour should be satisfied, and clergy and people enjoy peace and immunity."

But affairs in England were too far gone to be settled by law, or arbitration. Both parties had hopes of success in their own way; and the voice of a spiritual invisible power appealing to the conscience of every inner man, was drowned in the external din of arms. The barons knew, that whether absolved or not by his oath, John would never submit to be bound by the Charter; and they saw themselves strong by the union among themselves. John, on his part, was on revenge for the mortifications to which he had been compelled to stoop, and by the daily influx of soldiers, began to have hopes of soon being a match for his enemy.

Actual hostilities began at Rochester. The bishop of Canterbury claimed the wardenship of the Cinque Ports, and the Tower of London, in right of his see,

king had put them into Langton's hands : but Langton, seeing that the king occupied himself, ever since the granting the Charter, in preparations for war, suffered William D'Aubigny, with a party of knights, to seize Rochester for the barons.

John had fixed on Dover as the rendezvous of the foreign soldiers, whom his agents were collecting from every part of the Continent, and he spent three weeks in receiving and organizing them.

The soldiers thus obtained were levied among those freebooting bands by whom the whole of Europe west of the Rhine was at this time overrun. When Lewis the Young, attended by most of the great seigneurs of France, was absent in Palestine, bands of depredators began to form in different parts for the purposes of plunder. The withdrawal of the strong hand of the great lords left the country and smaller towns at their mercy. Outlaws, soldiers of broken fortune returning from the crusades, and the restless and lawless of all sorts, contributed to swell their ranks, till, from nightly marauders, they formed themselves in many places into regular bands, which kept together all the year, under a fixed commander. These bands would unite again, and form small armies, for the assault of some town or castle. While there was no war—a thing which seldom happened in the twelfth century—they sheltered themselves in the vast forests which covered so much of the country, and in the more mountainous parts of Auvergne and Burgundy ; the valleys at the root of the Pyrenees swarmed with them. Besides the general appellations of Coteraux and Routiers, they went in different parts of the country by national appellations, as Brabançons, Bretons, . . . It was, in fact, a return to the life of their remote ancestors. The German tribes, who had suc

cessively overrun the empire, were not nations or clans, but "voluntary and fluctuating associations of soldiers." The Alemanni, the Suevi, the Saxons, the Franks themselves were but bands of warriors united for temporary purposes, assuming the name of some distinguished tribe, and submitting voluntarily to some successful chief, who led them from their woods or marshes to ravage the provinces. In time of war they flocked like vultures to the scene; and princes began to find it convenient to hire them in whole troops into their service. Becket had first suggested this to Henry II. They were more practised soldiers, and more easily held together than the feudal tenants. All they required was pay and plunder; while they had these, their fidelity might be safely counted on. In process of time a kind of military honour arose among them, different from the notions of feudal allegiance. Many of their captains raised themselves to territorial rank by courage and conduct. Like piracy in the heroic times, their profession began to be esteemed honourable. A close friendship existed between Richard I. and Mercadier, a captain of Routiers. Mercadier made his first essay in arms under Richard, when duke of Aquitaine. While Richard was in Palestine, Mercadier remained at home, diligently improving his fortunes. On the king's return, he rejoined his former master, and from that time they became inseparable. The personal prowess and daring hardihood of the freebooter, with a savage barbarity delighting in bloodshed, were qualities congenial to Richard. They rode together, lodged in the same tent, and fought side by side. When Richard received his death-wound Mercadier was at his side, Mercadier's physician attended him, and the cruel revenge he took on the unhappy crossbow-man attested the grief and

rage that afflicted the Routier at the loss of his crowned comrade.

But though useful and acceptable to the great lords, there was a class of society of whom these Free Companions were the terror and the scourge. Unlike the famous English outlaw, they made war on the poor population of the open country and the small towns. They took the corn and cattle of the farmer, and massacred the peasants in sport. The Church then began to interfere. The Lateran council, in 1179, excommunicated all these armed robbers, as well as all lords who should take them into pay, or harbour them on their lands; and enacted that it should be lawful to reduce to slavery those of them who should be taken in arms. The brigands repaid this resistance of the Church by a special fury against the persons and property of the clergy. Neither church nor shrine afforded protection; chalices and altar-plate were a favourite object of rapine, and the most revolting profanities were perpetrated by them. "Wherever they went," says Rigord,<sup>9</sup> "they made prisoners of the priests and religious, dragging them about with them, and calling them in mockery, *chanters*, bade them chant in the midst of their sufferings. Some were so beaten that they died on the spot; others, held in long captivity, returned half-dead to their homes, by ransom. The churches they pillaged; even the Lord's body, which was kept there in silver or gold vessels, for the needs of the sick, they took — oh most grievous! — in hands dyed in human blood, and throwing it on the ground, trampled on it. The linen corporals they made into hoods for their concubines, and with hammers they broke up the sacred

<sup>9</sup> De Gest. Philip. p. 11.

vessels, stripping them of the jewels that enriched them."

As the great seigneurs rather encouraged this pest, the people were obliged to protect themselves. "The Lord<sup>1</sup> heard their cry, and sent them a deliverer—neither emperor, king, prince, nor prelate, but a poor man, named Durant." An association was formed for the extirpation of the plundering bands; its members were called "The Men of Peace." This fraternity gradually spread itself over the centre and south of France, till the Routiers found themselves encircled by a net of armed foes wherever they moved. A war of extermination was waged against them; one by one they were cut off, and on one or two occasions whole armies of them were massacred. At Dun le Roi in Berri, ten thousand of them are said to have been slaughtered by the Brethren of Peace in 1183. Parts of France and the Low Countries, however, continued to shelter considerable bodies of them. From the vast forest of Ardennes they could never be expelled; and numbers began to exercise the profession of robber in a more legal way. For-saking the forest life, and not disturbing the peace of the country on their own account, these, like the Free Companies of a later age, were ready to engage under any prince for a specified term, during which they fought for him, and plundered for themselves; and when their term of service was expired, retired with what they had gained to their own homes. Thus the Routiers of the twelfth century became, by slow transition, the standing army of the seventeenth.

Such were the materials with which John was now preparing to conquer England. He had begun to be

<sup>1</sup> Grand Chron. de S. Denys.

an outlaw in his own kingdom : nothing remained to him but his garrisoned castles. With a small attendance he shifted from fortress to fortress over the uninhabited downs of Wiltshire, or spent whole nights at sea, not daring to trust himself on land. In September he got into Dover Castle, and every day saw fresh bodies of foreign troops arrive.

The men of Poitou and Gascony, the king's own vassals, were brought over by Savary de Mauleon, whom John had made seneschal of Poitou. The Norman mercenaries were led by Foulkes de Breauté, a captain of Routiers, who was to John almost what Mercadier had been to his brother Richard. A Norman of illegitimate birth, he had entered the service of the king of England with no other possessions than his horse and armour. John soon made him governor of Bedford Castle, and afterwards provided for him by giving him a rich heiress, Margaret de Redviers, in marriage, and entrusting to him the castles of Oxford, Northampton, and Cambridge. "This adventurer," says Matthew Paris, "was known to be ready for any crime. He ever went beyond the orders he received, in the cruelty with which he executed them, which endeared him to the king." But "those who went into the house of God, and saw the end of these men," noted that such instruments of cruelty mostly met with a violent and miserable end. This infamous robber<sup>2</sup> ended his life in banishment and poverty<sup>3</sup> at S. Cyr, fulfilling hereby a vision which the legate Pandulph had concerning him, on occasion of his excesses at S. Alban's. He saw him in a vision standing in the choir of the church, when

<sup>2</sup> Prædo nequissimus. Wend.

<sup>3</sup> Morte miserâ.

suddenly a large stone detached itself from the tower, and falling on his head, crushed him altogether.

Gerard of Sotteghem, and Walter Buck had drawn from Louvain and Brabant bands "who thirsted for nothing but human blood, and neither feared God nor respected men;"<sup>4</sup> but the most important levy was that made in Flanders by Hugh de Boves. This man, "a good knight, but a proud man and a lawless,"<sup>5</sup> was sent over with a great sum of money to co-operate with a certain Robert de Bethune, half freebooter, half seigneur. He carried a sackful of letters of invitation from the king to the Flemish lords, passing them off for lampreys, to withdraw them from the curiosity of the inhabitants of Dover. De Boves durst not land in Flanders for fear of the king of France, but anchoring off Inne, he soon filled a large fleet of transports with recruits. They set sail for England on the eve of SS. Cosmas and Damian, when they encountered the same westerly wind which at the same season, five centuries later, so nearly proved fatal to the next invading fleet that sailed from that shore. The fleet was dispersed in all directions, to Holland and to Denmark, but the greater part were driven among the sandbanks of the Suffolk coast. So great a multitude of corpses were washed on shore here that the air was infected by them; they were the bodies not only of men, but of women and children; and it was believed, not without grounds, that the king had granted the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk to Hugh de Boves, to settle them with Flemings, and extirpate the native English. The few who escaped the sea were made slaves of by the English, into whose hands they fell.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Wend.      <sup>5</sup> Miles strenuus sed superbus et iniquus. W.

<sup>6</sup> Cogg.

The lapse of centuries has altered the form, but not the character of this coast. On a bank, in sight of the ancient town of Dunwich, once the capital of a Saxon kingdom, and seat of a bishop's see,<sup>7</sup> the ships of the two captains struck. Hugh de Boves perished at once with all his crew and treasure. Two boats put off from the shore to the other vessel. As they neared the sandbank the knights drew their swords to keep back the inferior part of the crew from crowding into the boats. This selfish movement cost them their lives. At sight of the drawn swords the boatmen stopped. A priest and a boy, who could swim, threw themselves into the water and made for the boats. The next tide swept away all the rest.<sup>8</sup>

In October, the king heard that D'Aubigny had been left by the barons in Rochester Castle with not more than a hundred knights. He immediately set off to surprise him. The Fleming, Robert de Bethune, expressed his wonder that the king should make the attempt with so weak a force. "I know them too well," was John's answer, "to esteem or to fear them. And to say the truth, I am more grieved that strangers should see what cowards my English are, than at all the mischief they are doing myself."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> John had, not long before, granted Dunwich a charter of wreck, which on this occasion must have been fearfully productive.

<sup>8</sup> Chron. Norm.

<sup>9</sup> This brings to mind what is told of James II. "When king James was at Dublin, 1689, the French ambassador came transported to tell him the news, that his master's fleet had defeated the English in Bantry Bay; instead of being pleased he let fall the air of his countenance, and coldly answered, '*is then the first time!*'" Higsons, note on Burnet.



The barons had taken an oath to relieve D'Aubigny if he should be attacked. Seven hundred men accordingly left London on the road for Rochester, but hearing that the king's army was increasing every day, they turned back to their comfortable quarters in London. Here they passed their time in drinking the best of wines, and playing dice, leaving Rochester to its fate.

If the king's contempt was justified by the general conduct of the barons, the defence of Rochester castle was an exception. "So strenuous and persevering a siege, and so stout a defence, there was never the like in our days."<sup>1</sup> The castle itself was one of the strongest in the kingdom. Since Odo had held it against the whole force of England, Normans and Saxons united, under William Rufus, it had been undergoing constant fortification under its new holders, the archbishops of Canterbury. "Whence it was much in the eye of such as were the authors of troubles following within the realm, so that from time to time it had a part in almost every tragedy."<sup>2</sup> Five mangonels, day and night, hurled a never-ceasing shower of stones against the wall. But the solidity of bishop Gundulph's Norman masonry was proof against every species of attack but mining. In this way great part of the outer wall had been thrown down, but the knights still maintained themselves in an inner tower. But when they had eaten everything that could be eaten, even to the war-horses, and the last morsel of all was gone, "a strait which was hard for them that had been brought up in delicacy,"<sup>3</sup> they thought it pitiful to perish of hunger, when they could not be beaten at arms. On S. Andrew's day they went out of the tower, and presented themselves before the king. Of

<sup>1</sup> *Cont. Hov.*<sup>2</sup> *Lambarde.*<sup>3</sup> *Cont. Hov.*

the hundred knights, one only had been killed by the javelin of an engine. In those days, the more obstinate the defence the better the terms granted to the defenders. • But John defied the rules of chivalry, as well as those of religion. He ordered them all to be hung. But the experienced eye of the soldier of fortune saw the danger to himself of such a precedent. "None of the foreign knights," said Savary de Mauleon, "will serve under you on such conditions. The enemy will retaliate on us, not on you." Harsh captivity and heavy ransom was all the revenge John durst indulge in towards the knights. But for those who formed the majority of the garrison, the servants and crossbow-men, who had shared the privations of the siege, and whose fidelity and valour had been proved alike with theirs, neither the laws of honourable warfare, nor the self-interest of the foreign captains, were concerned in their fate. John had before cut off a hand and a foot from a number whom the besieged had turned out as useless mouths. These could not look for more clemency. Unlike many tyrants, John did not make up for his hatred of the great by any sympathy with the humble. To the surprise of everyone, however, he spared the lives of all, singling out for his vengeance one crossbow-man only, who had been brought up in the king's service from a boy. The rest were distributed as slaves among the foreign soldiers, till any of their former masters should think it worth his while to pay a ransom for any of them.

This success encouraged the king's party as much as it disheartened that of the barons. Their remissness was justly censured. They had lain in London inactive throughout the siege. It is hard to say which they feared most—the foreign knights, or the fierce resolutions of the king's character. But the real secret of the

apathy was the consciousness that they had gone too far; that the right was no longer on their side. This was a feeling gradually gaining ground, both in and out of the kingdom; and as soon as the Church should publish and warrant it, their partisans would fast fall off.

And in the course of the siege this declaration came. On the representation of the archbishop of Dublin, and the bishop of London, whom the king had sent to Rome, a bull was sent to England excommunicating "all the disturbers of the king and realm of England." At the time this bull arrived, Langton was on the point of setting out for the General council,<sup>4</sup> which was now sitting at Rome. The bishop of Winchester, and Pandulph the deacon, two of the three to whom the bull was addressed, hastened to him after he was already on board ship, and begged his order to his suffragans throughout the province of Canterbury for the publication of the bull. Their promptitude was a sad trial for the archbishop. If he could have got to Rome without acknowledgment of the bull, he thought his representations of John's real designs would have induced Innocent to alter his present policy. This was to admit the king's repentance and submission as real. Whether it was so or no, as a judge, a pope must accept outward, overt acts, as done *bonâ fide*, whatever presumption of hypocrisy the penitent's previous character may raise. Such acts on John's part had been, the restitution, the act of humiliation, and the taking the cross.

But there seems no reason to think his repentance other than sincere; as much so at least as the first repentance of an habitually wicked mind can be. Humanly

<sup>4</sup> Fourth Lateran, sat from All-Saints' to S. Andrew's Day, the whole month of November.

speaking, where there has been a Christian education, there is always hope that the conscience may awaken. The most hopeless case is the decent and respectable sinner in protestant countries, where training of the conscience in youth is neglected. There is no part of such an one's nature to which Divine warnings can appeal. There is more hope of a profligate tyrant of the thirteenth century than of such : and again, none can set limits to God's power of touching the heart from within. Ahab repented, and was forgiven. Henry II. had done so severe a penance, and with so true a compunction, for S. Thomas's murder, that "all who beheld, wept thereat."<sup>5</sup> And John's past conduct, and his dying behaviour, seem to justify the contemporary chronicler in assigning as one of the motives of his yielding that "he had so greatly offended God and the holy Church, that he began altogether to despair of the salvation of his soul."<sup>6</sup>

But Langton wanted more than that the king should be reconciled to the Church. He sought the formal security of the Charter. John might have been sincere at first ; but his continuing so, with an army at his command, was unlikely. The archbishop could not bring himself to publish the excommunication against the confederate barons. In neglecting the bull, he was certainly wrong. It was ecclesiastical law, and he was bound to publish it as such. If it was founded on partial representations, he might appeal against it afterwards. However, he did not refuse to publish it, but begged the two commissioners that its publication might be postponed till he had an interview with the

<sup>5</sup> *Ut omnes videntes ad lacrymas cogeret.* Rob. de Monte.

<sup>6</sup> *De animæ suæ salute penitus desperabat.* Wend.

pontiff. This they could not do, and at once proceeded to put one of its clauses into operation against himself, as refusing his obedience; they pronounced him suspended from his sacerdotal, as well as episcopal functions. He made no resistance as he might have done, under the usual pretext of an appeal, but proceeded on his journey, observing the suspension with all humility. The bull was immediately published in England, being read in all the churches on Sundays and festivals. But as it only excommunicated the disturbers of the realm in general, and did not name any of the barons, they paid no regard to it, pretending it did not apply to them.

On Langton's appearance at Rome, the abbot of Beaulieu was there as his accuser. He represented the archbishop's connivance at the attempt of the barons to dethrone the king, and his neglect of the bull of excommunication. Langton made no defence, but humbly petitioned to be absolved from the suspension. "Not so, brother; you will not so easily get absolution for all the harm you have done, not to the king of England only, but to the Roman Church. We will take full counsel with our brethren here, what your punishment must be," was Innocent's answer. His suspension was accordingly confirmed; Innocent being grieved at the part he had taken, the rather that he had himself procured his promotion.<sup>7</sup> It was removed before Easter; the archbishop entering into the usual caution, to abide by the decision of the pope in his cause, with the additional proviso that he should not return to England till peace was settled between the king and the barons.

He sat in the council, notwithstanding the suspension, but his learning and experience were lost to it, as he took no part in its deliberations, seeing that he had lost

<sup>7</sup> Cont. Hov.

"the grace of his lord the pope."<sup>8</sup> But as his conduct had been upright through circumstances of peculiar difficulty, his high character was not sullied; "the Lord who knew that his conscience was unwounded, preserving his fame unblemished."<sup>9</sup>

The determination of Innocent to support the king was further shewn in two elections which took place about this time. The see of York had lain vacant since the death of Geoffry, John's half-brother, during the Interdict. Notwithstanding the charter of free election, the king accompanied his licence to elect with a recommendation of Walter de Gray, bishop of Worcester, his chancellor, and brother of the late bishop of Norwich. Like all the clerics of the court, he was destitute of any ecclesiastical learning: whatever his ability in the Chancery, his clerkship was contemptible. On this ground he was rejected by the chapter, who elected Simon Langton, brother of Stephen. They might not know at the time that he had previously been prohibited by Innocent, in a personal interview at Rome, from ever aspiring to that see. They thought that his reputation for theological science would be his recommendation to the learned pontiff. Here was a singular parallel! The other archiepiscopal see was now disputed between two claimants, the brothers of those two between whom the dispute respecting Canterbury had lain. On each side the same claims—for Langton, his character and theological attainments, and the choice of the chapter; De Gray was the king's servant and friend. The decision, however, was different.

<sup>8</sup> Quoniam intellexit gratiam Dom. Papæ sibi subtractam, pauca verba de cætero in concilio fecit. Cont. Hov.

<sup>9</sup> Chron. Dunst.

The king appealed to Rome on behalf of his minister. It was highly inexpedient for his realm that the brother of "his public enemy" should be made archbishop of York. The papal bull takes no notice of the king's reasoning, but annuls the election on the ground of the previous prohibition. The chapter were summoned to Rome to make the election in the pope's presence, where they chose the king's nominee, De Gray, justifying their submission by his chastity, which it should seem was his single virtue.<sup>1</sup>

Necessity may have obliged Innocent to support the king in everything at this critical moment. But it were to be wished that the victory that had just been won, had not been thus abandoned in practice, and that the race of courtly bishops should not have been thus perpetuated. Such prelates often compensate for their worldly character by the possession of worldly virtues. This was not the case with De Gray. As archbishop, he oppressed his tenants, and was unmerciful to the poor. During a great scarcity he hoarded his corn in his barns. He had a manor at Ripon, where he had laid up the produce of five years. It was feared that the grain might be injured by keeping; so he ordered it to be given out to his farmers for seed, who were to repay it in kind after the harvest. When the ricks came to be opened out for the purpose, they were found full of vermin of all sorts, and emitted so horrible a stench, that none could go near to uncover them, and they were obliged to be burnt as they stood. All who saw it judged it a miraculous punishment for his sin.

All the king's supporters, however, were not equally

<sup>1</sup> *Propter carnis munditiam ut qui ab utero matris virgo permanserat.* Wend.

fortunate. The false teacher, Alexander, was accused of having propagated heretical and mischievous doctrines. The king wrote himself to the pope in his behalf. "Be it known to your Holiness that the lies which were put upon Master Alexander, of S. Alban's, our clerk, were circulated only by the breath of envy ; wherefore it may be aptly said, without the cloak of falsity, that, as much was inflicted upon Isaiah by the Jewish people, upon Moses for the Ethiopian women, and Paul for the seven churches, so was no less inflicted upon Master Alexander by the slanderous rabble. Wherefore we earnestly supplicate, &c."<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding these most appropriate parallels from Scripture, sentence of condemnation was passed upon him ; he was deprived of the benefices John had heaped upon him during the Interdict, and reduced at last to such distress, that he, who had feasted at the king's table, now begged his bread from door to door in S. Albans.

<sup>2</sup> Rot. Claus., Ap. 23, 1215.



## CHAPTER VII.

THE archbishop being thus removed from the scene of action, the civil war, which now raged at home, is no longer connected with his personal history: but, as it was the consequence of the previous events, our subject cannot be closed without some notice of it.

The success at Rochester, and the apathy of the barons, had changed the face of affairs. The king no longer confined himself to his castles in the south, but marched into the centre of the kingdom to S. Albans. The cloister of that abbey the "secure retreat" of the religious and the student,<sup>3</sup> was now the council-hall where John and the foreign captains formed the plan of a complete and signal vengeance on the barons. This was nothing less than to put their lands—that is, the whole country northwards from that place, the royal manors excepted—under military execution. The force that lay at London was chiefly composed of the Northern barons and their retainers, so that the baronial party was denoted at the time by the name of "the Northerns."<sup>4</sup>

John divided his troops into two bodies. The Flemish mercenaries and his English adherents he took with him and marched northwards; the rest of the

<sup>3</sup> *Martyris Albani sit tibi prima claustrum quies.*

*Hic locus ætatis nostræ primordia novit*

*Annos felices, lætitiæque dies.*

Alexander Neckham.

<sup>4</sup> *Norenses, Dunst.; le Norois, Hist. Norm.*

foreign troops he directed towards the eastern counties. And now began a scene the like of which had not been in England since William the First's devastation of Northumbria. The foreign soldiery were let loose on the country with more than licence,—with express orders to commit all the havoc and excess in their power. John's route from S. Albans to Durham was marked by a broad track of ruins. The villages, barns, houses, ricks, everything that would take fire, down to the hedges, were burnt. The parks and inclosures were thrown down, the deer and the herds slaughtered, the orchards cut down, the towns put to heavy contributions. "These limbs of Satan covered like locusts the whole face of the land, for to this end they had been gathered together from distant parts to destroy from off the face of the earth all living things, man and beast. Running hither and thither, with swords and knives bare, they entered houses, churchyards, churches, and robbed all, sparing neither sex nor age. Priests standing at the very altar, holding in their hands the sign of the Lord's cross, wearing the sacred vestments, were carried off, tortured, spoiled, wounded. Knights and others, of whatsoever condition, to draw money from them, they hung up by the loins, feet, legs, thumbs, or arms, and so squirted salt and vinegar into their eyes, not discerning that they had been made in the likeness of God, and distinguished by the name of Christ. Others again on trivets and grid-irons they set on red-hot coals, and then bathing their scorched limbs in cold water, made them thus give up the ghost."<sup>5</sup>

The festival of Christmas gave the bare respite of a single day; the next morning the king was up before

<sup>5</sup> Wend. iii. p. 351.

light to commence his barbarous sport. The sufferings of the poor peasants, whose homes were burnt and corn destroyed, were aggravated by the season of the year. They crowded into churches and churchyards, an asylum generally, but not always, respected. On Christmas-day, at the hour of tierce, while the solemn mass was being celebrated in the abbey of Tyltey, in Essex, Savary de Mauleon's Poitevins burst into the church, broke open all the chests, and, overturning in their search the furniture of the altar, carried off a considerable sum which had been placed in deposit by the petty merchants or shopkeepers. Coggeshale Abbey shared the same fate on the Circumcision; afterwards Crowland, and even S. Edmund's did not escape. Before the martyrdom of S. Thomas, S. Edmund the king had been the most highly venerated Saint in England, as he still continued to be in the eastern part of the kingdom. His festival was included among holidays of precept by Langton in the synod of Oxford (1222), but omitted afterwards by Islip, in 1362. Miraculous virtue was more active at his tomb than anywhere else. It was believed too, that like S. Martin in Gaul, in the sixth and seventh centuries, the Saint was not only beneficent to heal, but powerful to punish. When all the shrines in England were being stripped to furnish king Richard's ransom, the king's justices demanded that this excruciation should be applied to S. Edmund's shrine among the rest. The abbot Sampson resisted. "Know of a truth that this shall never be done with my consent. But I will throw open the doors of the church, and whoso will, may enter; let him who dares, lay hand on the shrine." Then each of the justices answered for himself with an oath, "I will not meddle with this; S. Edmund punishes even those who are far off; how much more him who

shall seek to take away his coat?" Thus the shrine of S. Edmund remained untouched at that time, but<sup>6</sup> it was now rifled by these devastators. The isle of Ely, which had so long sheltered the last of the Saxon patriots, had been now again the refuge of all the neighbourhood round. It was, however, entered on two opposite sides, and all it contained fell a prey to the invaders, excepting the persons of some of the great men who escaped on horseback over the ice to London.

But the end was drawing near. We shall not relate in detail the events of the civil war that ensued. How the barons invited over the dauphin, who, in right of his wife, Blanche of Castille, a grand-daughter of Henry II., set up the shadow of a claim to the throne of England, which he alleged had been forfeited by John, agreeably to the sentence which had been passed upon him in the court of his suzerain, the king of France, for the murder of his nephew Arthur. How the pope continued to support what was truly and in fact, and by a possession of sixteen years, the legitimate right of John; and how he first excommunicated the barons of England by name, and afterwards was proceeding to pass the same sentence on Philip, when his death averted the quarrel which must thus have been renewed between himself and the king of France. Innocent died on the 16th of July, 1216; and the other party in the memorable struggle of which we have given an outline, soon followed. In October of the same year, John was suddenly summoned to give an account before the Great Judge of all of the government of his kingdom.

For ten months the country had been unceasingly devastated by this unrelenting scourge, and there seemed

<sup>6</sup> Joc. de Braheland, p. 71.

no prospect of a termination. For partial success inclined first to one and then to the other, but either party was as far as ever from complete superiority. Round and round the country, with his habitual rapidity, moved the king. Just as he had ever done in peace, he continued to do now in time of war; except that his sport was now to burn and destroy, instead of shooting the deer on his manors. From Winchester to Wales; from Wales back again to Lincoln. On the 12th of October he was marching northward from Wisbeach, and had to cross the estuary of the Welland from Cross Keys to Foss-Dyke. Himself and his army got over in safety, but the whole train that usually attended his movements, carts, carriages, and sumpter-horses, laden with the furniture and relics of the royal chapel, the treasure, including the crown and regalia, all the jewels and plate by which he set so much store, together with those in charge of them, were swept away by the tide, and the quicksands of the Wash.

He reached the abbey of Swinestead that night. In a sullen and impotent rage at his calamity, he ate, as usual, voraciously of the food that was brought him, which happened to be peaches and new beer. The irritation of his mind, aggravated by this excess, threw him into a fever attended by dysentery. Restless to the last he moved on, carried in a horse-litter when he could no longer sit on horseback, as far as the castle of Newark. The abbot of Croxton, at once his chaplain and his physician, heard his confession, and gave him the holy Eucharist. He lingered till the 18th. Midnight, the hour of his death, was marked by an alarming tempest. No sooner was the breath out of his body than it was deserted by his attendants, who carried off all they could lay their hands on, scarcely leaving it a decent covering.

He was sincerely regretted, however, by his mercenaries, who, assembling from all parts, escorted his body to Worcester, where he was buried by his own desire between the shrines of S. Oswald and S. Wulstan, a monk's hood in place of a crown around his head as a preservative against evil spirits. He who had lived "a man of ill conditions"<sup>7</sup> desired a burial among the Saints.

We do not propose to draw John's character. The foregoing narrative may speak for itself. Not one of our kings has left a more distinct impression of his personal character. The government and political institutions of the Conqueror have perhaps left the deepest traces in our history, but the temper and manners of John; the former as the sovereign, the latter as the man—the Cyrus and Cambyses respectively of English story. No one has ever spoken well of him—no one favourable or redeeming trait has been handed down respecting him. From Matt. Paris's

"Sordida fœdatur, fœdante Johanne, gehenna,"

downwards, all who have written of his reign have been unanimous in execrating this "*Monstrum a vitiis nulla virtute redemptum.*" Nothing can be said in mitigation of this sentence. It can only be pleaded that, instead of being confined to this single prince, the same character would hold good of more than one of our early kings besides. But Rufus, Henry II., Richard I., were powerful and successful; John was unfortunate, and the odium of failure has drawn the world's reprobation on his vice. The single attempt at apology that has fallen within our notice, proceeds from the chronicler of that age of infatuated servility which exulted in the good and

<sup>7</sup> *Homo malarum conditionum.* Johan. Ross.

glorious reign of Elizabeth, and had received its religion from Henry VIII.

“ Verilie, whosoever shall consider the course of the historie written of this prince, he shall find that he hath beene little beholden to the writers of that time in which he lived....To say what I thinke, he was not so void of devotion towards the Church as divers of his enemies have reported, who of mere malice conceale all his vertues, and hide none of his vices, but are plentifull enough in setting forth the same to the uttermost, and interpret all his doings and sayings to the worst, as may appeare to those that advisedlie read the works of them that write the order of his life, which may seeme rather an invective than a true historie. Neverthelesse, sith we cannot come by the truth of things through the malice of the writers, we must content ourselves with this unfriendlie description of his time. Certainlie, it should seem the man had a princelie heart in him, and wanted nothing but faithful subjects to have assisted him in revenging such wrongs as were done and offered by the French king and others.

“ Moreover, the pride and pretended authoritie of the cleargie he could not well abide, when they went about to wrest out of his hands the prerogative of his princelie will and government. True it is that to maintaine his warres, which he was forced to take in hand, as well in France as elsewhere, he was constrained to make all the shift he could devise to recover monie; and because he pinched their purses, they conceived no small hatred against him, which when he perceived, and wanted peradventure discretion to pass it over, he discovered now and then in his rage his immoderate displeasure; as *one not able to bridle his affections, a thing very hard in a stout stomach, and thereby missed now and then*

to compasse that which otherwise he might verie well have brought to passe."<sup>8</sup>

Our history naturally ends with the lives of the pope and the king, whose conflict has been its subject. The archbishop survived them twelve years. Two actions, by which he illustrated this period of peace and repose, may be briefly mentioned.

1. The translation of S. Thomas à Becket. It was most fitting that this should be performed by a successor, who not only sat in his chair, but trod in his steps and had suffered in the cause for which the Saint was martyred. For fifty years, the channel through which God's mercy had been chiefly shewn to the people of England, had been the tomb of S. Thomas, of Canterbury. He had become what S. Edmund had been a century before, the centre of that veneration which was paid to the Saints. This was owing to the number of wonderful cures wrought at his tomb. In his life proscribed, despised, lightly treated even by his friends, dying a worse death than a traitor and a felon, he had been privately and hastily buried in an obscure vault in the crypt, to save his body from insult. Here he might soon have been forgotten, or, if remembered, it might have been as one among the vast ocean of historical characters, one who had done and suffered no more than many others had done and suffered. The sentence of Heaven only could make known that his life had been offered to God, and that the sacrifice was acceptable in His sight. And this sentence was given in that way that is least of all liable to mistake, by the visible and tangible evidence of miracles. It is to the humble monk and the helpless poor, the obscure and the oppressed, but,

\* Hollinshed.



withal, faithful and obedient, God dispenses help and healing by the medium of the remains of the dead. It is not the canonization and the translation that give notoriety to the merits of the dead ; they are but the seal and sanction of the Church to the sentence which the common voice of the faithful has already proclaimed. But miracles have a tendency to produce miracles. For as a miracle is a co-operation of God's power with man's faith, the more the prayers of the believing are attracted to any particular relic, the more is its hidden virtue developed ; so continually fresh prodigies were performed at Canterbury. The public voice of the Church had obliged the pope (Alexander III.) to canonize him, and now the same voice called on the archbishop to provide a more honourable place for his wonder-working bones than the damp and dark undercrypt. His own piety prompted him to the performance of this with all the magnificence in his power. Notice was publicly given of the intention two years beforehand. Honorius III., in an official bull, exhorted "the English of every condition, observing mutual concord in the bond of charity, to purify their consciences from all perversities, and study so to exercise themselves in good works, that when the day of the solemnity should arrive, they might be fit to shew due honour to their holy martyr." The day fixed on was Tuesday the 7th of July—Tuesday being the day of the week on which he suffered. It was remarked at the time as a providential coincidence,<sup>9</sup> that it was the anniversary of the day on which the corpse of his murderer, Henry II., forsaken by his attendants, had been carried by strangers to Fontevraud. At the preceding Pentecost, Langton had presided at the coronation of

<sup>9</sup> *Deo procurante.* Stephan. Lang. Serm.

an earthly king, Henry ; he now administered at the exaltation of one who, as a prince, had power with God. Never before in England had such a multitude been gathered into one spot ; from every shire's end of England, from every corner of Christendom, of all sexes and of all ranks, abbots, priors, barons and clergy. There were twenty-four bishops present. The archbishop of Rheims said mass. And the holy remains were transferred from the unadorned stone coffin to a sumptuous chapel at the back of the high altar. Erasmus, who made a pilgrimage here, more from curiosity than devotion, during Warham's episcopate, describes minutely its then situation. It could only be shewn by the prior in person. A case of wood, raised by a pulley, disclosed a chest or coffin of gold, which contained the holy treasure. All present immediately knelt down ; but the bones themselves were not exhibited. "Inestimable riches adorned it ; the meanest thing to be seen was gold. Rare gems and of the largest size glittered and gleamed around, some of them exceeding the size of a goose's egg. The prior, with a white wand, pointed out each jewel, adding its value and the name of the donor. The richest were the presents of princes.<sup>1</sup>" For the entertainment of this vast crowd of pilgrims, all the resources at the archbishop's command were put into action. His manors and houses in Canterbury and the neighbourhood were opened for their reception, wine flowed in every part of the city, free entertainment and forage were provided all the way from London. "And, though all he could do could not provide for anything like all who came, yet it shewed," says the chronicler,<sup>2</sup> "his generous will." Langton's princely hospitality,

<sup>1</sup> *Peregrinatio Relig. ergo.*

<sup>2</sup> *Waverl.*


indeed, was not only to his power, but beyond his power; for the revenues of the see did not recover this outlay under himself and three of his successors.

2. The other act of the archbishop which we shall mention is the synod at Osney, in 1222, at which he presided, and at which were enacted a number of canons for the better government of the English Church, most probably drawn up by him. As Magna Charta forms the first of the Statutes of the realm, so those constitutions are the earliest provincial canons which are still recognized as binding in our ecclesiastical courts; and thus form the foundation of that vast fabric of ecclesiastical law which, when every other religious institution was being recklessly destroyed or remodelled, was left, from the sheer impossibility of dealing with it; reminding us of some of those old feudal towers, the solidity and tenacity of whose construction is such, that the destroyer has suffered them to remain, because the expense of pulling them down would be greater than the value of the materials.

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## NOTE (a), p. 2.

There is a remarkable peculiarity about the authorities for the reign of John. The numerous and circumstantial chroniclers who furnish such abundant materials for preceding reigns: Hoveden, Diceto, Benedict, Gervase, Brompton, and Newburgh, all end with the twelfth century. On the other hand, the public records commence with this reign. From the Patent and Close Rolls, a table has been drawn which enables us to ascertain the place where John was on nearly every day throughout the eighteen years of his reign. A circumstance this, especially in the case of a prince who almost lived upon horseback, hardly ever sleeping at the same place two nights together, which brings home that distant period to us in as lively a way as if it were only a century old. Besides this Itinerary, these records furnish many curious particulars of which use has been made. The chief authority for the general history is the chronicle of S. Alban's Abbey, written during this period by a contemporary, Roger of Wendover. When no other authority is given, this is to be understood. Matthew Paris, in the reign of Henry III., interpolated the genuine chronicle with statements of his own, less trustworthy than those of the original. There are other *contemporary annalists*, but brief and compendious in



comparison of Wendover. Of these Ralph of Coggeshale, and a chronicle apparently made up by Mr. Petrie, from Walter of Coventry, and two others,<sup>3</sup> are the most valuable. For the civil war and the invasion of Louis, a chronicle, in Norman French,<sup>4</sup> lately published by M. Michel, is more full than any other known source. No use has yet been made of it by any English historian of this reign. It was apparently written by one of John's Flemish mercenaries; and is a kind of journal, in a rude colloquial style, of events that befel the army. Many of the monastic annals contain additional particulars; e.g. those of Waverley, Burton and Margam, but they bear traces of either being written much posterior to the events, or having imperfect information. In general, it may be laid down as a rule regarding these Latin chronicles, that those which are not contemporary to the events they relate, are very unsatisfactory authority. A striking instance of this is furnished by the story that John died of poison, which is first hinted at by a writer of the year 1298, in the single expression, 'veneno extinctus;' but before the end of the next century has expanded into a long and circumstantial narrative, and is delivered by Foxe as an undoubted truth, and illustrated by a cut. Lastly, may be mentioned the two collections of Innocent III. Letters, which contain the most part of the letters written by him to the king and the bishops on this affair.

<sup>3</sup> Cited as Continuator Hovedeni.

<sup>4</sup> Chron. Norm.

## NOTE (b), p. 3.

Bale, and a host of writers copying him, make Langton to have been Chancellor of the University of Paris. But at this period there was no such officer. There was the Chancellor of the Church of Paris, and the Chancellor of the Church of S. Genevieve, but no Chancellor of the University of Paris. The error probably originated in mistaking the expressions "*scholis regebat*," or "*præsidebat*," used by the older writers who mention Langton—i.e., Henry of Gand, and Trithemius, by which is only meant "taught in the schools." The accurate Leland is the only later writer who avoids this mistake.

THE END.

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